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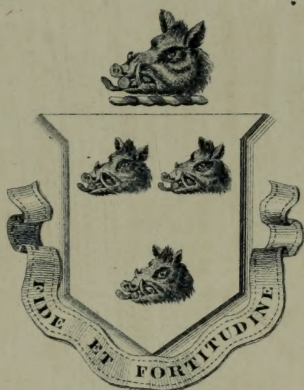
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THE
PLAYS AND POEMS
OF
WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE.

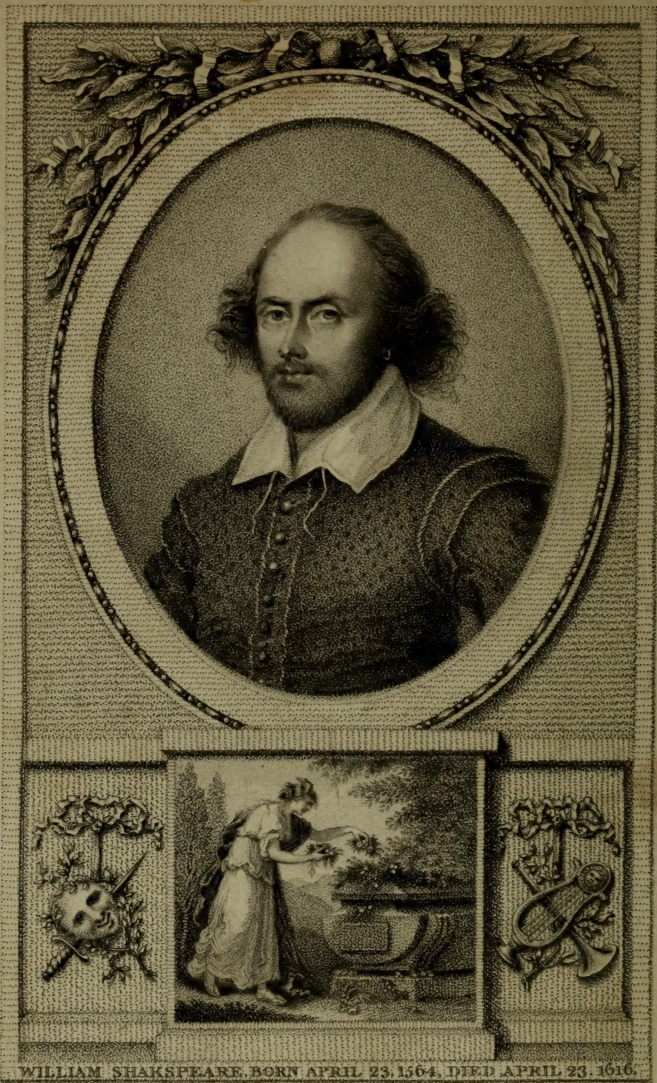
VOLUME THE FIRST.

PART I.

CONTAINING

PROLEGOMENA.





*Engraved by C. Knight, from a Drawing of the same size, made by Oris Humphry,
from the original Picture in the Collection of his Grace the Duke of Chandos.*

THE
PLAYS AND POEMS
OF
WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE,
IN TEN VOLUMES;

COLLATED *VERBATIM* WITH THE MOST AUTHENTICK
COPIES, AND REVISED:

WITH THE
CORRECTIONS AND ILLUSTRATIONS
OF
VARIOUS COMMENTATORS;

TO WHICH ARE ADDED,

AN ESSAY ON THE CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER
OF HIS PLAYS;

AN ESSAY RELATIVE TO SHAKSPEARE AND JONSON;

A DISSERTATION ON THE THREE PARTS
OF KING HENRY VI.;

AN HISTORICAL ACCOUNT OF THE ENGLISH STAGE;
AND NOTES;

By EDMOND MALONE.

Τῆς φύσεως γραμματικῆς τῆς, τὸν καλαμὸν ἀποδρεχῶν εἰς ὕβν.

Vet. Auct. apud Suidam.

— QUEM TU, DEA, TEMPORE IN OMNI

OMNIBUS ORNATUM VOLUISTI EXCELLERE REBUS.—*Lucret.*

LONDON: PRINTED BY H. BALDWIN,

For J. Rivington and Sons, L. Davis, B. White and Son, T. Longman,
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Ogilvie and Speare, J. Cuthell, J. Lackington, and E. Newbery.

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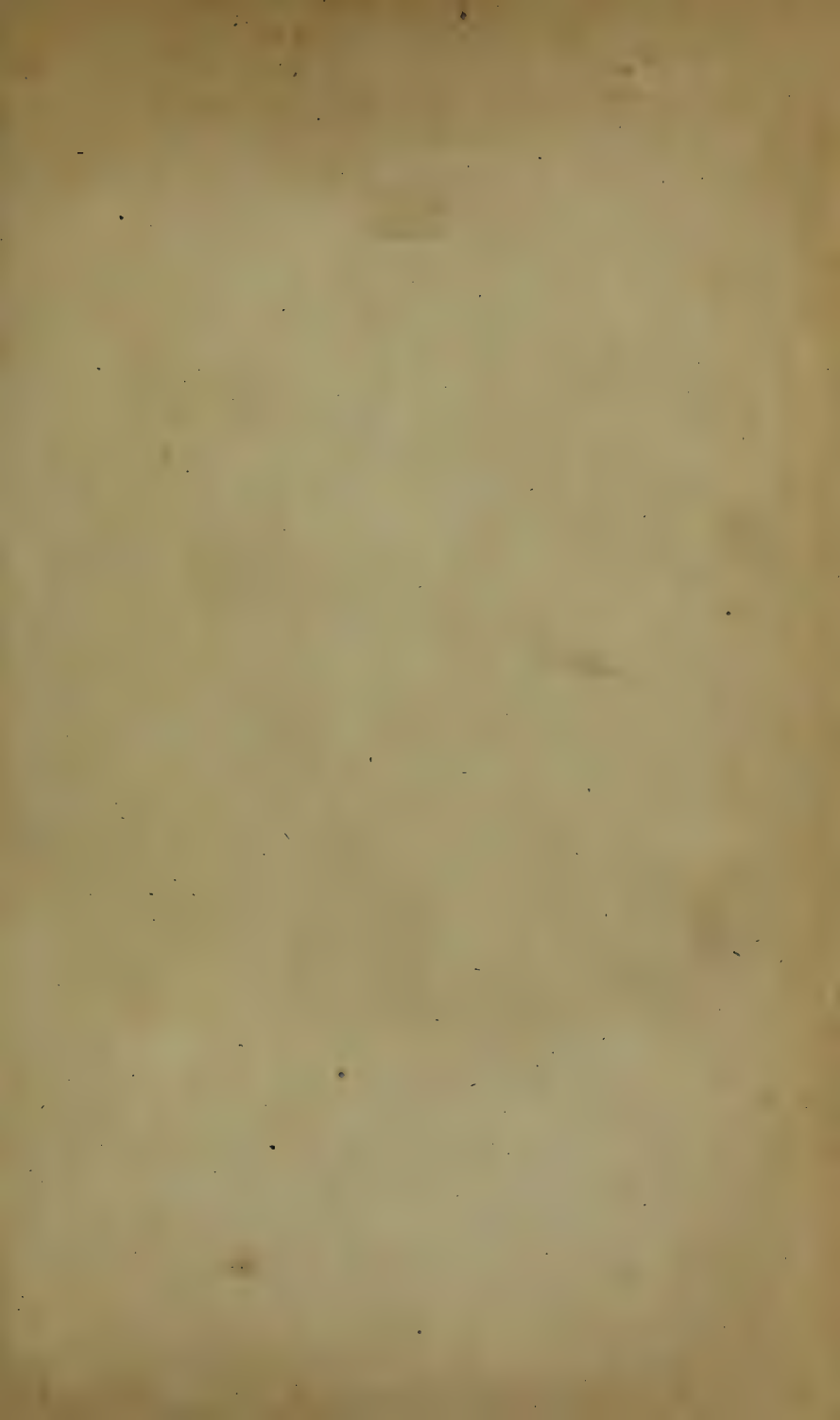
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May, 1873





EDMOND MALONE, ESQ.

P R E F A C E.

IN the following work, the labour of eight years, I have endeavoured, with unceasing solicitude, to give a faithful and correct edition of the plays and poems of Shakspeare. Whatever imperfection or errours therefore may be found in it, (and what work of so great length and difficulty was ever free from error or imperfection?) will, I trust, be imputed to any other cause than want of zeal for the due execution of the task which I ventured to undertake.

The difficulties to be encountered by an editor of the works of Shakspeare, have been so frequently stated, and are so generally acknowledged, that it may seem unnecessary to conciliate the publick favour by this plea: but as these in my opinion have in some particulars been over-rated, and in others not sufficiently insisted on, and as the true state of the ancient copies of this poet's writings has never been laid before the publick, I shall consider the subject as if it had not been already discussed by preceding editors.

In the year 1756 Dr. Johnson published the following excellent scheme of a new edition of Shakspeare's dramattick pieces, which he completed in 1765:

“ When the works of Shakspeare are, after so many editions, again offered to the publick, it will doubtless be enquired, why Shakspeare stands in more need of critical assistance than any other of the English writers,

VOL. I. PART I.

2

and

and what are the deficiencies of the late attempts, which another editor may hope to supply.

“ The business of him that republishes an ancient book is, to correct what is corrupt, and to explain what is obscure. To have a text corrupt in many places, and in many doubtful, is, among the authours that have written since the use of types, almost peculiar to Shakspeare. Most writers, by publishing their own works, prevent all various readings, and preclude all conjectural criticism. Books indeed are sometimes published after the death of him who produced them, but they are better secured from corruptions than these unfortunate compositions. They subsist in a single copy, written or revised by the authour; and the faults of the printed volume can be only faults of one descent.

“ But of the works of Shakspeare the condition has been far different: he sold them, not to be printed, but to be played. They were immediately copied for the actors, and multiplied by transcript after transcript, vitiated by the blunders of the penman, or changed by the affectation of the player; perhaps enlarged to introduce a jest, or mutilated to shorten the representation; and printed at last without the concurrence of the authour, without the consent of the proprietor, from compilations made by chance or by stealth out of the separate parts written for the theatre: and thus thrust into the world surreptitiously and hastily, they suffered another depravation from the ignorance and negligence of the printers, as every man who knows the state of the press in that age will readily conceive.

“ It is not easy for invention to bring together so many causes concurring to vitiate a text. No other
authour

author ever gave up his works to fortune and time with so little care ; no books could be left in hands so likely to injure them, as plays frequently acted, yet continued in manuscript : no other transcribers were likely to be so little qualified for their task as those who copied for the stage, at a time when the lower ranks of the people were universally illiterate : no other editions were made from fragments so minutely broken, and so fortuitously re-united ; and in no other age was the art of printing in such unskilful hands.

“ With the causes of corruption that make the revival of Shakspeare’s dramattick pieces necessary, may be enumerated the causes of obscurity, which may be partly imputed to his age, and partly to himself.

“ When a writer outlives his contemporaries, and remains almost the only unforgotten name of a distant time, he is necessarily obscure. Every age has its modes of speech, and its cast of thought ; which, though easily explained when there are many books to be compared with each other, become sometimes unintelligible, and always difficult, when there are no parallel passages that may conduce to their illustration. Shakspeare is the first considerable authour of sublime or familiar dialogue in our language. Of the books which he read, and from which he formed his stile, some perhaps have perished, and the rest are neglected. His imitations are therefore unnoted, his allusions are undiscovered and many beauties, both of pleasantry and greatness, are lost with the objects to which they were united, as the figures vanish when the canvas has decayed.

“ It is the great excellence of Shakspeare, that he drew his scenes from nature, and from life. He copied

the manners of the world then passing before him, and has more allusions than other poets to the traditions and superstitions of the vulgar; which must therefore be traced before he can be understood.

“ He wrote at a time when our poetical language was yet unformed, when the meaning of our phrases was yet in fluctuation, when words were adopted at pleasure from the neighbouring languages, and while the Saxon was still visibly mingled in our diction. The reader is therefore embarrassed at once with dead and with foreign languages, with obsolescence and innovation. In that age, as in all others, fashion produced phraseology, which succeeding fashion swept away before its meaning was generally known, or sufficiently authorised: and in that age, above all others, experiments were made upon our language, which distorted its combinations, and disturbed its uniformity.

“ If Shakspeare has difficulties above other writers, it is to be imputed to the nature of his work, which required the use of the common colloquial language, and consequently admitted many phrases allusive, elliptical, and proverbial, such as we speak and hear every hour without observing them; and of which, being now familiar, we do not suspect that they can ever grow uncouth, or that, being now obvious, they can ever seem remote.

“ These are the principal causes of the obscurity of Shakspeare; to which may be added that fulness of idea, which might sometimes load his words with more sentiment than they could conveniently convey, and that rapidity of imagination which might hurry him to a second thought before he had fully explained the
the

the first. But my opinion is, that very few of his lines were difficult to his audience, and that he used such expressions as were then common, though the paucity of contemporary writers makes them now seem peculiar.

“ Authours are often praised for improvement, or blamed for innovation, with very little justice, by those who read few other books of the same age. Addison himself has been so unsuccessful in enumerating the words with which Milton has enriched our language, as perhaps not to have named one of which Milton was the authour: and Bentley has yet more unhappily praised him as the introducer of those elisions into English poetry, which had been used from the first essays of versification among us, and which Milton was indeed the last that practised.

“ Another impediment, not the least vexatious to the commentator, is the exactness with which Shakspeare followed his authour. Instead of dilating his thoughts into generalities, and expressing incidents with poetical latitude, he often combines circumstances unnecessary to his main design, only because he happened to find them together. Such passages can be illustrated only by him who has read the same story in the very book which Shakspeare consulted.

“ He that undertakes an edition of Shakspeare, has all these difficulties to encounter, and all these obstructions to remove.

“ The corruptions of the text will be corrected by a careful collation of the oldest copies, by which it is hoped that many restorations may yet be made: at least it will be necessary to collect and note the variations as

materials for future criticks, for it very often happens that a wrong reading has affinity to the right.

“ In this part all the present editions are apparently and intentionally defective. The criticks did not so much as wish to facilitate the labour of those that followed them. The same books are still to be compared; the work that has been done, is to be done again, and no single edition will supply the reader with a text on which he can rely as the best copy of the works of Shakspeare.

“ The edition now proposed will at least have this advantage over others. It will exhibit all the observable varieties of all the copies that can be found; that, if the reader is not satisfied with the editor’s determination, he may have the means of choosing better for himself.

“ Where all the books are evidently vitiated, and collation can give no assistance, then begins the task of critical sagacity: and some changes may well be admitted in a text never settled by the authour, and so long exposed to caprice and ignorance. But nothing shall be imposed, as in the Oxford edition, without notice of the alteration; nor shall conjecture be wantonly or unnecessarily indulged.

“ It has been long found, that very specious emendations do not equally strike all minds with conviction, nor even the same mind at different times; and therefore, though perhaps many alterations may be proposed as eligible, very few will be obtruded as certain. In a language so ungrammatical as the English, and so licentious as that of Shakspeare, emendatory criticism is always hazardous; nor can it be allowed to any man who is not particularly versed in the writings of that age,

age, and particularly studious of his authour's diction. There is danger lest peculiarities should be mistaken for corruptions, and passages rejected as unintelligible, which a narrow mind happens not to understand.

“ All the former criticks have been so much employed on the correction of the text, that they have not sufficiently attended to the elucidation of passages obscured by accident or time. The editor will endeavour to read the books which the authour read, to trace his knowledge to its source, and compare his copies with the originals. If in this part of his design he hopes to attain any degree of superiority to his predecessors, it must be considered, that he has the advantage of their labours; that part of the work being already done, more care is naturally bestowed on the other part; and that, to declare the truth, Mr. Rowe and Mr. Pope were very ignorant of the ancient English literature; Dr. Warburton was detained by more important studies; and Mr. Theobald, if same be just to his memory, considered learning only as an instrument of gain, and made no further inquiry after his author's meaning, when once he had notes sufficient to embellish his page with the expected decorations.

“ With regard to obsolete or peculiar diction, the editor may perhaps claim some degree of confidence, having had more motives to consider the whole extent of our language than any other man from its first formation. He hopes, that, by comparing the works of Shakspeare with those of writers who lived at the same time, immediately preceded, or immediately followed him, he shall be able to ascertain his ambiguities, dis-

entangle his intricacies, and recover the meaning of words now lost in the darkness of antiquity.

“ When therefore any obscurity arises from an allusion to some other book, the passage will be quoted. When the diction is entangled, it will be cleared by a paraphrase or interpretation. When the sense is broken by the suppression of part of the sentiment in pleasantry or passion, the connection will be supplied. When any forgotten custom is hinted, care will be taken to retrieve and explain it. The meaning assigned to doubtful words will be supported by the authorities of other writers, or by parallel passages of Shakspeare himself.

“ The observation of faults and beauties is one of the duties of an annotator, which some of Shakspeare’s editors have attempted, and some have neglected. For this part of his task, and for this only, was Mr. Pope eminently and indisputably qualified: nor has Dr. Warburton followed him with less diligence or less success. But I never observed that mankind was much delighted or improved by their asterisks, commas, or double commas; of which the only effect is, that they preclude the pleasure of judging for ourselves, teach the young and ignorant to decide without principles; defeat curiosity and discernment by leaving them less to discover; and, at last, shew the opinion of the critick, without the reasons on which it was founded, and without affording any light by which it may be examined.

“ The editor, though he may less delight his own vanity, will probably please his reader more, by supposing

sing him equally able with himself to judge of beauties and faults, which require no previous acquisition of remote knowledge. A description of the obvious scenes of nature, a representation of general life, a sentiment of reflection or experience, a deduction of conclusive argument, a forcible eruption of effervescent passion, are to be considered as proportionate to common apprehension, unassisted by critical officiousness; since to conceive them, nothing more is requisite than acquaintance with the general state of the world, and those faculties which he must always bring with him who would read Shakspeare.

“ But when the beauty arises from some adaptation of the sentiment to customs worn out of use, to opinions not universally prevalent, or to any accidental or minute particularity, which cannot be supplied by common understanding, or common observation, it is the duty of a commentator to lend his assistance.

“ The notice of beauties and faults thus limited will make no distinct part of the design, being reducible to the explanation of obscure passages.

“ The editor does not however intend to preclude himself from the comparison of Shakspeare’s sentiments or expression with those of ancient or modern authours, or from the display of any beauty not obvious to the students of poetry; for as he hopes to leave his authour better understood, he wishes likewise to procure him more rational approbation.

“ The former editors have affected to slight their predecessors: but in this edition all that is valuable will be adopted from every commentator, that posterity may consider it as including all the rest, and
exhibit

exhibit whatever is hitherto known of the great father of the English drama."

Though Dr. Johnson has here pointed out with his usual perspicuity and vigour the true course to be taken by an editor of Shakspeare, some of the positions which he has laid down may be controverted, and some are indubitably not true. It is not true that the plays of this authour were more incorrectly printed than those of any of his contemporaries: for in the plays of Marlowe, Marston, Fletcher, Massinger, and others, as many errors may be found. It is not true that the art of printing was in no other age in so unskilful hands. Nor is it true, in the latitude in which it is stated, that "these plays were printed from compilations made by chance or by stealth out of the separate parts written for the theatre:" two only of all his dramas, *The Merry Wives of Windsor* and *K. Henry V.* appear to have been thus thrust into the world, and of the former it is yet a doubt whether it is a first sketch or an imperfect copy. I do not believe that words were then adopted at pleasure from the neighbouring languages, or that an antiquated diction was then employed by any poet but Spenser. That the obscurities of our authour, to whatever cause they may be referred, do not arise from the paucity of contemporary writers, the present edition may furnish indisputable evidence. And lastly, if it be true, that "very few of Shakspeare's lines were difficult to his audience, and that he used such expressions as were then common," (a position of which I have not the smallest doubt,) it cannot be true, that "his reader is embarrassed at once with dead and with foreign languages, with obsolescence and innovation."

"When

When Mr. Pope first undertook the task of revising these plays, every anomaly of language, and every expression that was not understood at that time, were considered as errors or corruptions, and the text was altered, or amended, as it was called, at pleasure. The principal writers of the early part of this century seem never to have looked behind them, and to have considered their own era and their own phraseology as the standard of perfection: hence from the time of Pope's edition, for above twenty years, to alter Shakspeare's text and to restore it, were considered as synonymous terms. During the last thirty years our principal employment has been to *restore*, in the true sense of the word; to eject the arbitrary and capricious innovations made by our predecessors from ignorance of the phraseology and customs of the age in which Shakspeare lived.

As on the one hand our poet's text has been described as more corrupt than it really is, so on the other, the labour required to investigate fugitive allusions, to explain and justify obsolete phraseology by parallel passages from contemporary authours, and to form a genuine text by a faithful collation of the original copies, has not perhaps had that notice to which it is entitled; for undoubtedly it is a laborious and a difficult task: and the due execution of this it is, which can alone entitle an editor of Shakspeare to the favour of the publick.

I have said that the comparative value of the various ancient copies of Shakspeare's plays has never been precisely ascertained. To prove this, it will be necessary to go into a long and minute discussion, for which,
however,

however, no apology is necessary: for though to explain and illustrate the writings of our poet is a principal duty of his editor, to ascertain his genuine text, to fix what is to be explained, is his first and immediate object: and till it be established which of the ancient copies is entitled to preference, we have no criterion by which the text can be ascertained.

Fifteen of Shakspeare's plays were printed in quarto antecedent to the first complete collection of his works, which was published by his fellow-comedians in 1623. These plays are, *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, *Love's Labour's Lost*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hamlet*, *The Two parts of K. Henry IV.* *K. Richard II.* *K. Richard III.* *The Merchant of Venice*, *K. Henry V.* *Much ado about Nothing*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Troilus and Cressida*, *King Lear*, and *Othello*.

The players, when they mention these copies, represent them all as mutilated and imperfect; but this was merely thrown out to give an additional value to their own edition, and is not strictly true of any but two of the whole number; *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, and *K. Henry V.*—With respect to the other thirteen copies, though undoubtedly they were all surreptitious, that is, stolen from the playhouse and printed without the consent of the authour or the proprietors, they *in general* are preferable to the exhibition of the same plays in the folio; for this plain reason, because, instead of printing these plays from a manuscript, the editors of the folio, to save labour, or from some other motive, printed the greater part of them from the very copies which they represented as maimed

maimed and imperfect, and frequently from a late, instead of the earliest, edition; in some instances with additions and alterations of their own. Thus therefore the first folio, as far as respects the plays above enumerated, labours under the disadvantage of being at least a second, and in some cases a third, edition of these quartos. I do not however mean to say, that many valuable corrections of passages undoubtedly corrupt in the quartos are not found in the folio copy; or that a single line of these plays should be printed by a careful editor without a minute examination, and collation of both copies; but those quartos were in general the basis on which the folio editors built, and are entitled to our particular attention and examination as *first* editions.

It is well known to those who are conversant with the business of the press, that, (unless when the authour corrects and revises his own works,) as editions of books are multiplied, their errors are multiplied also; and that consequently every such edition is more or less correct, as it approaches nearer to or is more distant from the first. A few instances of the gradual progress of corruption will fully evince the truth of this assertion.

In the original copy of *K. Richard II.* 4to. 1597, Act II. sc. ii. are these lines:

“ You promis’d, when you parted with the king,
“ To lay aside *life-harming* heaviness.”

In a subsequent quarto, printed in 1608, instead of *life-harming* we find *HALF-harming*; which being perceived by the editor of the folio to be nonsense, he substituted, instead of it,—*SELF-harming* heaviness.

In

In the original copy of *K. Henry IV. P. I.* printed in 1598, Act IV. sc. iv. we find—

“ And what with Owen Glendower’s absence thence,

“ (Who with them was *a rated sinew* too,)” &c.

In the fourth quarto printed in 1608, the article being omitted by the negligence of the compositor, and the line printed thus,

“ Who with them was rated sinew too,”—

the editor of the next quarto, (which was copied by the folio,) instead of examining the first edition, amended the error (leaving the metre still imperfect) by reading—

“ Who with them was *rated firmly* too.”

So, in the same play, Act I. sc. iii. instead of the reading of the earliest copy—

“ Why, what a *candy* deal of courtesy—”

candy being printed in the first folio instead of *candy*, by the accidental inversion of the letter *n*, the editor of the second folio corrected the error by substituting *gawdy*.

So, in the same play, Act III. sc. i. instead of the reading of the earliest impression,

“ The frame and huge foundation of the earth—”

in the second and the subsequent quartos, the line by the negligence of the compositor was exhibited without the word *huge*:

“ The frame and foundation of the earth—”

and the editor of the folio, finding the metre imperfect, supplied it by reading,

“ The frame and *the* foundation of the earth.”

Another

Another line in Act V. sc. ult. is thus exhibited in the quarto, 1598:

“ But that the *earthy* and cold hand of death—”

Earth being printed instead of *earthy*, in the next and the subsequent quarto copies, the editor of the folio amended the line thus:

But that the *earth* and *the* cold hand of death—.

Again, in the preceding scene, we find in the first copy,

“ I was not born a yielder, thou proud Scot.”—

instead of which in the fifth quarto, 1613, we have

“ I was not born *to yield*, thou proud Scot.”

This being the copy that was used by the editor of the folio, instead of examining the most ancient impression, he corrected the error according to his own fancy, and probably while the work was passing through the press, by reading—

“ I was not born *to yield*, thou *haughty* Scot.”

In *Romeo and Juliet*, Juliet says to her nurse,

“ In faith, I am sorry that thou art not well.”

and this line in the first folio being corruptly exhibited—

“ In faith, I am sorry that thou art *so* well.”

the editor of the second folio, to obtain some sense, printed—

“ In faith, I am sorry that thou art *so ill*.”

In the quarto copy of the same play, published in 1599, we find—

“ ———— O happy dagger,

“ This is thy sheath ; there rust, and let me die.”

In the next quarto, 1609, the last line is thus represented :

“ ’*Tis* is thy sheath,” &c.

The editor of the folio, seeing that this was manifestly wrong, absurdly corrected the error thus :

“ ’*Tis in* thy sheath ; there rust, and let me die.”

Again, in the same play, quarto 1599, *misbav’d* being corruptly printed, for *misbehav’d*,—

“ But like a *misbav’d* and fullen wench—”

the editor of the first folio, to obtain something like sense, reads—

“ But like a *misshap’d* and fullen wench—”

and instead of this, the editor of the second folio, for the sake of metre, gives us—

“ But like a *misshap’d* and a fullen wench—.”

Again, in the first scene of *K. Richard III.* quarto, 1597, we find this line :

“ That *tempers* him to this extremity.”

In the next quarto, and all subsequent, *tempfs* is corruptly printed instead of *tempers*. The line then wanting a syllable, the editor of the folio printed it thus :

“ That *tempts* him to this *harsh* extremity.”

Not to weary my reader, I shall add but two more instances, from *Romeo and Juliet* :

“ Away to heaven, respective lenity,

“ And *fire-ey’d* fury be my conduct now !”

says

says Romeo, when provoked by the appearance of his rival. Instead of this, which is the reading of the quarto 1597, the line, in the quarto, 1599, is thus corruptly exhibited :

“ And fire *end* fury be my conduct now !”

In the subsequent quarto copy *and* was substituted for *end*; and accordingly in the folio the poet’s fine imagery is entirely lost, and Romeo exclaims,

“ And *fire and* fury be my conduct now !”

The other instance in the same play is not less remarkable. In the quarto, 1599, the Friar, addressing Romeo, is made to say,

“ Thou *puts up* thy fortune, and thy love.”

The editor of the folio perceiving here a gross corruption, substituted these words :

“ Thou *puttest up* thy fortune, and thy love ;”

not perceiving that *up* was a misprint for *upon*, and *puts* for *pouts*, (which according to the ancient mode was written instead of *powt’st*,) as he would have found by looking into another copy without a date, and as he might have conjectured from the corresponding line in the original play printed in 1597, had he ever examined it :

“ Thou *frown’st upon* thy fate, that smiles on thee.”

So little known indeed was the value of the early impressions of books, (not revised or corrected by their authours,) that King Charles the First, though a great admirer of our poet, was contented with the *second*

folio edition of his plays, unconscious of the numerous misrepresentations and interpolations by which every page of that copy is disfigured; and in a volume of the quarto plays of Beaumont and Fletcher, which formerly belonged to that king, and is now in my collection, I did not find a single first impression. In like manner Sir William D'Avenant, when he made his alteration of the play of *Macbeth*, appears to have used the third folio printed in 1664¹.

The various readings found in the different impressions of the quarto copies are frequently mentioned by the late editors: it is obvious from what has been already stated, that the first edition of each play is alone of any authority², and accordingly to no other have I paid any attention. All the variations in the subsequent quartos were made by accident or caprice. Where, however, there are two editions printed in the same year, or an undated copy, it is necessary to examine each of them, because which of them was first, can not be ascertained; and being each printed from a manuscript, they carry with them a degree of authority to which a re-impression cannot be entitled. Of the tragedy of *King Lear* there are no less than three copies, varying from each other, printed for the same bookseller, and in the same year.

¹ In that copy *anoimt* being corruptly printed instead of *aroint*,

“ *Anoimt* thee, witch, the rump-fed ronyon cries,”
the error was implicitly adopted by D'Avenant.

² Except only in the instance of *Romeo and Juliet*, where the first copy, printed in 1597, appears to be an imperfect sketch, and therefore cannot be entirely relied on. Yet even this furnishes many valuable corrections of the more perfect copy of that tragedy in its present state, printed in 1599.

Of all the plays of which there are no quarto copies extant, the first folio, printed in 1623, is the only authentick edition.

An opinion has been entertained by some that the second impression of that book, published in 1632, has a similar claim to authenticity. "Whoever has any of the folios, (says Dr. Johnson,) has all, excepting those diversities which mere re-iteration of editions will produce. I collated them all at the beginning, but afterwards used only the first, from which (he afterwards adds,) the subsequent folios never differ but by accident or negligence." Mr. Steevens, however, does not subscribe to this opinion. "The edition of 1632, (says that gentleman,) is not without value; for though it be in some places more incorrectly printed than the preceding one, it has likewise the advantage of various readings, which are not merely such as re-iteration of copies will naturally produce."

What Dr. Johnson has stated, is not quite accurate. The second folio does indeed very frequently differ from the first by negligence or chance; but much more frequently by the editor's profound ignorance of our poet's phraseology and metre, in consequence of which there is scarce a page of the book which is not disfigured by the capricious alterations introduced by the person to whom the care of that impression was entrusted. This person in fact, whoever he was, and Mr. Pope, were the two great corrupters of our poet's text; and I have no doubt that if the arbitrary alterations introduced by these two editors were numbered, in the plays of which no quarto copies are extant, they would greatly exceed all the corruptions

and errors of the press in the original and only authentic copy of those plays. Though my judgment on this subject has been formed after a very careful examination, I cannot expect that it should be received on my mere assertion: and therefore it is necessary to substantiate it by proof. This cannot be effected but by a long, minute, and what I am afraid will appear to many, an uninteresting disquisition: but let it still be remembered that to ascertain the genuine text of these plays is an object of great importance.

On a revision of the second folio printed in 1632, it will be found, that the editor of that book was entirely ignorant of our poet's phraseology and metre, and that various alterations were made by him, in consequence of that ignorance, which render his edition of no value whatsoever.

I. His ignorance of Shakspeare's phraseology is proved by the following among many other instances.

He did not know that the double negative was the customary and authorized language of the age of Queen Elizabeth, and therefore, instead of—

“ Nor to her bed *no* homage do I owe.”

Comedy of Errors, Act III. sc. ii.

he printed—“ Nor to her bed *a* homage do I owe.”

So, in *As you like it*, Act II. sc. iv. instead of—
“ I can *not* go no further”, he printed, “ I can go no further.”

In *Much ado about nothing*, Act III. sc. i. Hero, speaking of Beatrice, says,

“ —there will she hide her,

“ *To listen our propose.*”

for which the second folio substitutes—

“ ——— there will she hide her,

“ To listen *to* our *purpose*.”

Again, in *The Winter's Tale*, Act I. sc. ii.

“ Thou dost make possible, things not so held.”

The plain meaning is, thou dost make those things possible, which are held to be impossible. But the editor of the second folio, not understanding the line, reads—

“ Thou dost make possible things not *to be* so held;”

i. e. thou dost make those things to be esteemed impossible, which are possible: the very reverse of what the poet meant.

In the same play is this line :

“ I am appointed *him* to murder you.”

Here the editor of the second folio, not being conversant with Shakspeare's irregular language, reads—

“ I *appointed him* to murder you.”

Again, in *Macbeth* :

“ This diamond he greets your wife withal,

“ By the name of most kind hostess; and *shut up*

“ In measureless content.”

Not knowing that *shut up* meant *concluded*, the editor of the second folio reads—

“ ——— and *shut it up* [i. e. the diamond]

“ In measureless content.”

In the same play the word *lated*, (“ Now spurs the *lated* traveller—”) not being understood, is changed to *latest*, and *Colmes-Inch* to *Colmes-hill*.

Again, *ibidem*: when Macbeth says, "Hang those that talk of fear," it is evident that these words are not a wish or imprecation, but an injunction to hang all the cowards in Scotland. The editor of the second folio, however, considering the passage in the former light, reads:

"Hang them that *stand* in fear!"

From the same ignorance,

— "And all our yesterdays have lighted fools

"The way to *duffy* death."

is changed to—

"And all our yesterdays have lighted fools

"The way to *study* death."

In *K. Richard II.* Bolingbroke says,

"And I must find that title in your *tongue*," &c.

i. e. you must address me by that title. But this not being understood, *town* is in the second folio substituted for *tongue*.

The double comparative is common in the plays of Shakspeare. Yet, instead of

"—— I'll give my reasons

"*More worthier* than their voices."

Coriolanus, Act III. sc. i. First Folio.

we have in the second copy,

"*More worthy* than their voices."

So, in *Othello*, Act I. sc. v.—"opinion, a sovereign mistress of effects, throws a more *safer* voice on you," —is changed in the second folio, to—"opinion, &c. throws a more *safe* voice on you."

Again,

Again, in *Hamlet*, A& III. sc. ii. instead of—"your wisdom should shew itself more *richer*, to signify this to the doctor;" we find in the copy of 1632, "—your wisdom should shew itself more *rich*," &c.

In *The Winter's Tale*, the word *vast* not being understood,

"—they shook hands as over a *vast*." First Folio.
we find in the second copy, "—as over a *vast sea*."

In *K. John*, A& V. sc. v. first folio, are these lines:

"———The English lords
"By his persuasion are *again* fallen off."

The editor of the second folio, thinking, I suppose, that as these lords had not *before* deserted the *French* king, it was improper to say that they had *again* fallen off, substituted "—are *at last* fallen off;" not perceiving that the meaning is, that these lords had gone back again to their own countrymen, whom they had before deserted.

In *K. Henry VIII.* A& II. sc. ii. Norfolk speaking of Wolfey, says, "I'll venture one *have* at him." This being misunderstood, is changed in the second copy to—"I'll venture one *heave* at him."

Julius Cæsar likewise furnishes various specimens of his ignorance of Shakspeare's language. The phrase, to *bear hard*, not being understood, instead of—

"Caius Ligarius doth *bear* Cæsar *hard*." First Folio.
we find in the second copy,

"Caius Ligarius doth bear Cæsar *hatred*."

and from the same cause the words *dank*, *blest*, and *hurtled*, are dismissed from the text, and more familiar words substituted in their room³.

In like manner in the third act of *Coriolanus*, sc. ii. the ancient verb to *owe*, i. e. to possess, is discarded by this editor, and *own* substituted in its place.

In *Antony and Cleopatra*, we find in the original copy these lines :

“ ——— I say again, thy spirit
 “ Is all afraid to govern thee near him,
 “ But he *alway*, 'tis noble.”

Instead of restoring the true word *away*, which was thus corruptly exhibited, the editor of the second folio, without any regard to the context, altered another part of the line, and absurdly printed—“ But he *alway is* noble.”

In the same play, Act I. sc. iii. Cleopatra says to Charmian—“ *Quick* and return ;” for which the editor of the second folio, not knowing that *quick* was either used adverbially, or elliptically for *Be quick*, substitutes—“ *Quickly*, and return.”

In *Timon of Athens*, are these lines :

“ And that unaptness made your minister
 “ Thus to excuse yourself.”

i. e. and made that unaptness your minister to excuse

- ³ “ To walk unbraced, and suck up the humours
 “ Of the *dank* morning.” First Folio.
 “ Of the *dark* morning.” Second Folio.
 “ We are *blest* that Rome is rid of him.” First Folio.
 “ We are *glad* that Rome is rid of him.” Second Folio.
 “ The noise of battle *hurtled* in the air.” First Folio.
 “ The noise of battle *hurried* in the air.” Second Folio.
 yourself ;

yourself; or, in other words, availed yourself of that unaptness as an excuse for your own conduct. The words being inverted and put out of their natural order, the editor of the second folio supposed that *unaptness*, being placed first, must be the nominative case, and therefore reads—

“ And that unaptness made *you* minister,

“ Thus to excuse yourself.”

In that play, from the same ignorance, instead of Timon's exhortation to the thieves, to kill as well as rob,—“ Take wealth and *lives* together,” we find in the second copy, “ Take wealth, and *live* together.” And with equal ignorance and licentiousness this editor altered the epitaph on Timon, to render it what he thought metrical, by leaving out various words. In the original edition it appears as it does in Plutarch, and therefore we may be certain that the variations in the second copy were here, as in other places, all arbitrary and capricious.

Again, in the same play, we have—

“ *I* defil'd land,”

and—

“ O, my good lord, the world is but a *word*,” &c.

The editor not understanding either of these passages, and supposing that *I* in the first of them was used as a personal pronoun, (whereas it stands according to the usage of that time for the affirmative particle, *ay*,) reads in the first line,

“ *I* defy land;”

and exhibits the other line thus :

O my

“O, my good lord, the world is but a *world*,” &c.

Our authour and the contemporary writers generally write *wars*, not *war*, &c. The editor of the second folio being unapprised of this, reads in *Antony and Cleopatra*, Act III. sc. v. “Cæsar having made use of him in the *war* against Pompey,”—instead of *wars*, the reading of the original copy.

The seventh scene of the fourth act of this play concludes with these words: “Dispatch.—Enobarbus!” Anthony, who is the speaker, desires his attendant *Eros* to dispatch, and then pronounces the name *Enobarbus*, who had recently deserted him, and whose loss he here laments. But there being no person on the scene but *Eros*, and the point being inadvertently omitted after the word *dispatch*, the editor of the second folio supposed that Enobarbus must have been an error of the press, and therefore reads :

“Dispatch, *Eros*.”

In *Troilus and Cressida*, Cressida says,

“Things won are done ; *joy’s soul* lies in the doing.”

i. e. the *soul of joy* lies, &c. So, “*love’s visible soul*,” and “*my soul of counsel* ;” expressions likewise used by Shakspeare. Here also the editor of the second folio exhibits equal ignorance of his authour ; for instead of this eminently beautiful expression, he has given us—

“Things won are done ; *the soul’s joy* lies in doing.”

In *King Richard III.* Ratcliff, addressing the lords at Pomfret, says,

“Make

“ Make haste, the hour of death is *expiate*.”

for which the editor of the second folio, alike ignorant of the poet's language and metre, has substituted,

“ Make haste, the hour of death is *now expir'd*.”

So, in *Romeo and Juliet* :

“ The earth hath swallow'd all my hopes but she.”

The word *The* being accidentally omitted in the first folio, the editor of the second supplied the defect by reading—

Earth hath *up* swallow'd all my hopes but she.

Again, in the same play: “ I'll lay fourteen of my teeth, and yet, to my *teen* be it spoken, I have but four :” not understanding the word *teen*, he substituted *teeth* instead of it.

Again, *ibidem* :

“ Prick'd from the lazy finger of a *maid*—”

Man being corruptly printed instead of *maid* in the first folio, 1623, the editor of the second, who never examined a single quarto copy⁴, corrected the error at random, by reading—

“ Prick'd from the lazy finger of a *woman*.”

Again :

4 That this editor never examined any of the quarto copies, is proved by the following instances :

In *Troilus and Cressida*, we find in the first folio,

“ ———— the remainder viands

“ We do not throw in unrespective *same*,

“ Because we now are full.”

Finding this nonsense, he printed “ in unrespective *place*.” In the quarto he would have found the true word—*seven*.

Again:

“Dost thou love me? I know thou wilt say, ay:”

The word *me* being omitted in the first folio, the editor of the second capriciously supplied the metre thus:

“Dost thou love? O, I know thou wilt say, ay.”

This

Again, in the same play, the following lines are thus corruptly exhibited:

“That all the Greeks *begin to* worship Ajax;

“Since things in motion *begin to* catch the eye,

“Than what not stirs.”

the words—“*begin to*,” being inadvertently repeated in the second line, by the compositor’s eye glancing on the line above.

The editor of the second folio, instead of examining the quarto, where he would have found the true reading,

“Since things in motion *sooner* catch the eye,”

thought only of amending the metre, and printed the line thus:

“Since things in motion *’gin to* catch the eye—”

leaving the passage nonsense, as he found it.

So, in *Titus Andronicus*:

“And let no *comfort* delight mine ear—”

being erroneously printed in the first folio, instead of “And let no *comforter*,” &c. the editor of the second folio corrected the error according to his fancy, by reading—

“And let no *comfort else* delight mine ear.”

So, in *Love’s Labour’s Lost*, Vol. II. p. 369: “Old Mantuan, who understands thee not, *loves thee not*.” The words in the Italick character being inadvertently omitted in the first folio, the editor of the second folio, instead of applying to the quarto to cure the defect, printed the passage just as he found it: and in like manner in the same play implicitly followed the

the

This expletive, we shall presently find, when I come to speak of our poet's metre, was his constant expedient in all difficulties.

In *Measure for Measure* he printed *ignominy* instead of *ignomy*, the reading of the first folio, and the common language of the time. In the same play, from his ignorance of the constable's humour, he corrected his phraseology, and substituted *instant* for *distant*; ("—at that very *distant* time:") and in like manner he makes

the error of the first folio, which has been already mentioned,

"O, that your face were so full of O's—"

though the omission of the word *not*, which is found in the quarto, made the passage nonsense.

So, in *Much ado about Nothing*,

"And I will break with her. Was't not to this end," &c. being printed instead of—

"And I will break with her *and with her father*,

"*And thou shalt have her*. Was't not to this end," &c.

the error, which arose from the compositor's eye glancing from one line to the other, was implicitly adopted in the second folio.

Again, in *A Midsummer's-Night's Dream*:

"*Ab me*, for aught that I could ever read,

"Could ever hear," &c.

the words *Ab me* being accidentally omitted in the first folio, instead of applying to the quarto for the true reading, he supplied the defect, according to his own fancy, thus:

"*Hermia*, for aught that I could ever read," &c.

Again, in *The Merchant of Venice* he arbitrarily gives us—

"The ewe bleat for the lamb *when you behold*,"

instead of

"*Why he hath made* the ewe bleat for the lamb."

See p. xxxi. Innumerable other instances of the same kind might be produced.

Dogberry

Dogberry in *Much ado about nothing*, exhort the watch not to be *vigilant*, but *vigilant*.

Among the marks of love, Rosalind in *As you like it* mentions “ a beard neglected, which you have not ;— but I pardon you for that ; for, simply, your *having* in beard is a younger brother’s revenue.” Not understanding the meaning of the word *having*, this editor reads—“ your having *no* beard,” &c.

In *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, Pyramus says,

“ I *see* a voice ; now will I to the chink,

“ To spy an’ I can *hear* my Thisby’s face.”

Of the humour of this passage he had not the least notion, for he has printed, instead of it,

“ I *hear* a voice ; now will I to the chink,

“ To spy an’ I can *see* my Thisby’s face.”

In *The Merchant of Venice*, Act I. sc. i. we find in the first folio,

“ And out of doubt you do more wrong—”

which the editor of the second perceiving to be imperfect, he corrected at random thus :

“ And out of doubt you do *to me* more wrong.”

Had he consulted the original quarto, he would have found that the poet wrote—

“ And out of doubt you do *me now* more wrong.”

So, in the same play,—“ But *of* mine, then yours,” being corruptly printed instead of—“ But *if* mine, then yours,” this editor arbitrarily reads—But *first* mine, then yours.

Again,

Again, *ibidem*:

“ Or even as well use question with the wolf,

“ The ewe bleat for the lamb.”

the words “ *Why he hath made*” being omitted in the first folio at the beginning of the second line, the second folio editor supplied the defect thus absurdly:

“ Or even as well use question with the wolf,

“ The ewe bleat for the lamb *when you behold*.”

In *Othello* the word *snipe* being misprinted in the first folio,

“ If I should time expend with such a *snipe*.”

the editor not knowing what to make of it, substituted *swain* instead of the corrupted word.

Again, in the same play,

“ *For* of my heart those charms, thine eyes, are
blotted.”

being printed in the first folio instead of—“ *Forth* of my heart,” &c. which was the common language of the time, the editor of the second folio amended the error according to his fancy, by reading—

“ *For off* my heart those charms, thine eyes, are
blotted.”

Again, in the same play, Act V. sc. i. not understanding the phraseology of our authour's time,

“ Who's there? Whose noise is this, that *cries on*
murder?”

he substituted—“ Whose noise is this, that *cries out* murder?” and in the first act of the same play, not perceiving the force of an eminently beautiful epithet, for “ *desarts* idle,” he has given us “ — *desarts wild*.”

Again,

Again, in that tragedy we find—

“ — what charms,

“ What conjuration, and what mighty magick,

“ (For such proceeding I am charg'd withal,)

“ I won his daughter.”

that is, I won his daughter *with* ; and so the editor of the second folio reads, not knowing that this kind of elliptical expression frequently occurs in this authour's works, as I have shewn in a note on the last scene of *Cymbeline*, and in other places ⁵.

In like manner he has corrupted the following passage in *A Midsummer-Night's Dream* :

“ So will I grow, so live, so die, my lord,

“ Ere I will yield my virgin patent up

“ Unto his lordship, *whose unwished* yoke

“ My soul consents not to give sovereignty.”

i. e. to give sovereignty *to*. Here too this editor has unnecessarily tampered with the text, and having contracted the word *unwished*, he exhibited the line thus :

“ Unto his lordship, *to* whose *unwish'd* yoke

“ My soul consents not to give sovereignty.”

an interpolation which was adopted in the subsequent copies, and which, with all the modern editors, I incautiously suffered to remain in the present edition ⁶.

The grave-digger in *Hamlet* observes “ that your tanner will last you nine *year*,” and such is the phraseology which Shakspeare always attributes to his lower

⁵ See Vol. VIII. p. 472, n. 3 ; Vol. VII. p. 128, n. 8 ; and Vol. IX. p. 469, n. 3.

⁶ See Vol. X. Appendix, p. 517.

characters; but instead of this, in the second folio, we find—" nine years."

" Your skill shall, like a star i' the *darkest* night,
" Stick fire off indeed,—"

says Hamlet to Laertes. But the editor of the second folio, conceiving, I suppose, that if a star appeared with extraordinary scintillation, the night must necessarily be luminous, reads—" i' the *brightest* night : " and, with equal sagacity, not acquiescing in Edgar's notion of "*four-inch'd* bridges," this editor has furnished him with a much safer pass, for he reads—" *four-arch'd* bridges."

In *K. Henry VIII.* are these lines:

" — If we did think
" His *contemplation* were above the earth,—"

Not understanding this phraseology, and supposing that *were* must require a noun in the plural number, he reads :

" — If we did think
" His *contemplations* were above the earth," &c.

Again, in *Troilus and Cressida*, Act IV. sc. ii.

" With wings more *momentary-swift* than thought."
This compound epithet not being understood, he reads:

" With wings more *momentary, swifter* than thought."

In *The Taming of the Shrew*, Act I. sc. ii. Hortensio, describing Catharine, says,

" Her only fault (and that is—*faults* enough)
" Is,—that she is intolerable curst ;—"

meaning, that this one was a *host of faults*. But this not being comprehended by the editor of the second
VOL. I. PART I. c folio,

folio, with a view, doubtless, of rendering the passage more grammatical, he substituted “—and that is *fault* enough.”

So, in *K. Lear*, we find—“Do you know this noble gentleman?” But this editor supposing, it should seem, that a gentleman could not be noble, or that a noble could not be a gentleman, instead of the original text, reads—“Do you know this *nobleman*?”

In *Measure for Measure*, Act II. sc. i. Escalus, addressing the Justice, says, “I pray you home to dinner with me:” this familiar diction not being understood, we find in the second folio, “I pray you *go* home to dinner with me.” And in *Othello*, not having sagacity enough to see that *apines* was printed by a mere transposition of the letters, for *paines*,

“Though I do hate him, as I do hell *apines*,” instead of correcting the word, he evaded the difficulty by omitting it, and exhibited the line in an imperfect state.

The Duke of York, in the third part of *K. Henry VI.* exclaims,

“That face of his the hungry cannibals

“Would not have touch’d, would not have stain’d
with blood.”

These lines being thus carelessly arranged in the first folio,

“That face of his

“The hungry cannibals would not have touch’d,

“Would not have stain’d with blood—”

the editor of the second folio, leaving the first line imperfect as he found it, completed the last line by this absurd interpolation:

“Would not have stain’d *the roses just* with blood.”

These

These are but a few of the numerous corruptions and interpolations found in that copy, from the editor's ignorance of Shakspeare's phraseology.

II. Let us now examine how far he was acquainted with the metre of these plays.

In *The Winter's Tale*, Act III. sc. ii. we find—

“What wheels? racks? fires? what flaying? boiling?”

“In leads, or oils?”—

Not knowing that *fires* was used as a dissyllable, he added the word *burning* at the end of the line:

“What wheels? racks? fires? what flaying? boiling? *burning?*”

So again, in *Julius Cæsar*, Act III. sc. ii. from the same ignorance, the word *all* has been interpolated by this editor:

“And with the brands *fire all* the traitors' houses.” instead of the reading of the original and authentick copy,

“And with the brands *fire* the traitors' houses.”

Again, in *Macbeth*:

“I would, while it was smiling in my face,

“Have pluck'd my nipple from his boneless gums,

“And dash'd the brains out, had I so *sworn*

“As you have done to this.”

Not perceiving that *sworn* was used as a dissyllable, he reads—“had I *but* so sworn.”

Charms our poet sometimes uses as a word of two syllables. Thus, in *The Tempest*, Act I. sc. ii.

“Curs'd be I, that did so! All the *charms*,” &c.

instead of which this editor gives us,

“Curs'd be I, that *I* did so! All the charms,” &c.

Hour is almost always used by Shakspeare as a dissyllable, but of this the editor of the second folio was ignorant; for instead of these lines in *King Richard II.*

“ ——— So sighs, and tears, and groans,
 “ Shew minutes, times, and *hours*: but my time
 “ Runs posting on,” &c.

he gives us—

“ ——— So sighs, and tears, and groans,
 “ Shew minutes, times, and hours: O but my
 time⁷,” &c.

So again, in *The Comedy of Errors*:

“ I’ll meet you in that place some *hour*, *sir*, hence,”
 instead of the original reading,
 “ I’ll meet you in that place some *hour* hence.”

⁷ In *Measure for Measure* we find these lines:

“ ——— Merciful heaven!
 “ Thou rather, with thy sharp and sulphurous bolt,
 “ Split’st the unwedgeable and gnarled oak,
 “ Than the soft mirtle;—But man, proud man,” &c.

There can be no doubt that a word was omitted in the last line; perhaps some epithet to *mirtle*. But the editor of the second folio, resorting to his usual expedient, absurdly reads:

“ Than the soft mirtle. O but man, proud man,—”

So, in *Titus Andronicus*, Act III. sc. ii. *complaynet* being corruptly printed instead of *complainer*,

“ Speechless *complaynet*, I will learn thy thoughts,—”
 this editor, with equal absurdity, reads:

“ Speechless *complaint*, O I will learn thy thoughts.”

I have again and again had occasion to mention in the notes on these plays, that *omission* is of all the errors of the press that which most frequently happens. On collating the fourth edition of *King Richard III.* printed in 1612, with the second printed in 1598, I found no less than *twenty-six* words omitted.

Again,

Again, in *The Winter's Tale*, Act I. sc. ii.

“ ———— wishing clocks more swift?

“ Hours, minutes? *the* noon, midnight? and all eyes,” &c.

instead of the original reading,

“ Hours, minutes? noon, midnight? and all eyes,” &c.

Again, in *All's well that ends well*, Act II. sc. iii.

“ Which challenges itself as honours born,

“ And is not like the *fire*. Honours thrive,” &c.

This editor, not knowing that *fire* was used as a dissyllable, reads:

“ And is not like the fire. Honours *best* thrive,” &c.

So, in *K. Henry VI.* P. I.

“ Rescued is Orleans from the *English*.”

Not knowing that *English* was used as a trisyllable, he has completed the line, which he supposed defective, according to his own fancy, and reads:

“ Rescu'd is Orleans from the English *wolves*.”

The same play furnishes us with various other proofs of his ignorance of our poet's metre. Thus, instead of

“ Orleans the bastard, Charles, Burgundy,—”

he has printed (not knowing that *Charles* was used as a word of two syllables,)

“ Orleans the bastard, Charles, *and* Burgundy.”

So, instead of the original reading,

“ Divinest creature, Astræa's daughter,—”

(*Astræa* being used as a word of three syllables,) he has printed—

“ Divinest creature, *bright* Astræa's daughter.”

Again, *ibidem* :

“Whereas the contrary bringeth blifs.”

Not knowing that *contrary* was used as a word of four syllables, he reads :

“Whereas the contrary bringeth *forth* blifs.”

So *sure* is used in the same play, as a dissyllable :

“Gloster, we’ll meet ; to thy cost, be *sure*.”

but this editor, not aware of this, reads :

“Gloster, we’ll meet ; to thy *dear* cost, be sure.”

Again, in *K. Henry VI.* P. II.

“And so to *arms*, victorious father,—”

arms being used as a dissyllable. But the second folio reads :

“And so to arms, victorious *noble* father.”

Again, in *Twelfth-Night*, Act I. sc. i. we find—

“——— when liver, brain, and heart,

“These sovereign thrones, are all supply’d, and fill’d,

“(Her sweet perfections) with one self-king.”

for which the editor, not knowing that *perfections* was used as a quadrisyllable, has substituted—

“——— when liver, brain, and heart,

“These sovereign thrones, are all supply’d, and fill’d,

“(Her sweet perfections) with one *self-same* king.”

Again, in *K. Henry VI.* P. II.

“Prove it, *Henry*, and thou shalt be king.”

for which the editor of the second folio, not knowing *Henry* to be used as a trisyllable, gives us,

“*But*

“ *But* prove it, Henry, and thou shalt be king.”

In like manner *dazzled* is used by Shakspeare as a tri-syllable in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*; Act II. sc. iv.

“ And that hath *dazzled* my reason’s light.”

instead of which, we find in the second folio,

“ And that hath *dazzled so* my reason’s light.”

The words *neither*, *rather*, &c. are frequently used by Shakspeare as words of one syllable. So, in *K. Henry VI.* P. III.

“ And *neither* by treason, nor hostility,

“ To seek to put me down—”

for which the editor of the second folio has given us,

“ Neither by treason, nor hostility,” &c.

In *Timon of Athens*, Act III. sc. v. Alcibiades asks,

“ Is this the balsam, that the usuring senate

“ *Pours* into captains’ wounds? banishment?”

The editor of the second folio, not knowing that *pours* was used as a dissyllable, to complete the supposed defect in the metre, reads :

“ Is this the balsam, that the usuring senate

“ *Pours* into captains’ wounds! *ha!* banishmen?”

Tickled is often used by Shakspeare and the contemporary poets, as a word of three syllables. So, in *K. Henry VI.* P. II.

“ She’s *tickled* now; her fume *needs* no spurs.”

instead of which, in the second folio we have—

“ She’s tickled now; her fume *can need* no spurs.”

So, in *Titus Andronicus*, Act II. sc. i.

“ Better than he have *worn* Vulcan’s badge.”

This editor, not knowing that *worn* was used as a dissyllable, reads:

“ Better than he have *yet* worn Vulcan’s badge.”

Again, in *Cymbeline*, Act II. sc. v.

“ All faults that name, nay, that hell knows, why hers,

“ In part, or all; but rather all: for even to vice,” &c.

These lines being thus carelessly distributed in the original copy,—

“ All faults that name, nay, that hell knows,

“ Why hers, in part, or all; but rather all:” &c.

the editor of the second folio, to supply the defect of the first line, arbitrarily reads, with equal ignorance of his author’s metre and phraseology,

“ All faults that *may be named*, nay, that hell knows,

“ Why hers,” &c.

In *K. Henry IV.* P. II. Act I. sc. iii. is this line:

“ And being now trimm’d in thine own desires,—”

instead of which the editor of the second folio, to remedy a supposed defect in the metre, has given us—

“ And being now trimm’d *up* in thine own desires,—”

Again, in *As you like it*, Act II. sc. i.

“ — he pierceth through

“ The body of city, country, court,—”

instead of which we find in the second folio, (the editor not knowing that *country* was used as a trisyllable,)

“ — he

“ ——— he pierceth through
 “ The body of city, *the* country, court.”

In like manner, in *The Winter's Tale*, Act I. sc. i. he has given us :

“ ——— we knew not
 “ The doctrine of ill-doing, *no* nor dream'd
 “ That any did :—”

instead of

“ ——— we knew not
 “ The doctrine of ill-doing, nor dream'd,” &c.
doctrine being used as a word of three syllables.

“ Pay him fix thousand,” &c. says Portia in *The Merchant of Venice*,

“ Before a friend of this description
 “ Should lose a hair through Bassanio's fault.”

the word *hair* being used as a dissyllable, or *Bassanio* as a quadrissyllable. Of this the editor of the second folio was wholly ignorant, and therefore reads :

“ Should lose a hair through *my* Bassanio's fault.”

In *The Winter's Tale*, Act IV. sc. iii. Florizel, addressing Perdita, says,

“ ——— my desires
 “ Run not before mine honour ; nor my lusts
 “ *Burn* hotter than my faith.”

To complete the last hemistick, Perdita is made to reply,

“ O but, fir,
 “ Your resolution cannot hold,” &c.

Here again this editor betrays his ignorance of Shakspeare's

speare's metre; for not knowing that *burn* was used as a disyllable, he reads—

“ O but, *dear* fir,” &c.

Again, in *King Henry VIII.* Act II. sc. iii. the Old Lady declares to Anne Boleyn,

“ 'Tis strange; a three-pence bow'd would *hire* me,

“ Old as I am, to queen it.”

But instead of this, *hire* not being perceived to be used as a word of two syllables, we find in the second folio,

“ 'Tis strange; a three-pence bow'd *now* would hire me,” &c.

This editor, indeed, was even ignorant of the author's manner of accenting words, for in *The Tempest*, where we find,

“ — Spirits, which by mine art

“ I have from their *confines* call'd to enact

“ My present fancies,—”

he exhibits the second line thus:

“ I have from *all* their confines call'd to enact,” &c.

Again, in *K. Lear*, Act II. sc. i. instead of—

“ To have the expence and waste of *his* révenues,—”

the latter word, being, I suppose, differently accented after our poet's death, the editor of the second folio has given us,

“ To have the expence and waste of révenues.”

Various other instances of the same kind might be produced; but that I may not weary my readers, I will only

only add, that no person who wishes to peruse the plays of Shakspeare should ever open the Second Folio, or either of the subsequent copies, in which all these capricious alterations were adopted, with many additional errors and innovations.

It may seem strange, that the person to whom the care of supervising the second folio was consigned, should have been thus ignorant of our poet's language: but it should be remembered, that in the beginning of the reign of Charles the First many words and modes of speech began to be disused, which had been common in the age of Queen Elizabeth. The editor of the second folio was probably a young man, perhaps born in the year 1600. That Sir William D'Avenant, who was born in 1605, did not always perfectly understand our author's language, is manifest from various alterations which he has made in some of his pieces, The successive Chronicles of English history, which were compiled between the years 1540 and 1630, afford indubitable proofs of the gradual change in our phraseology during that period. Thus a narrative which Hall exhibits in what now appears to us as very uncouth and ancient diction, is again exhibited by Holinshed, about forty years afterwards, in somewhat a less rude form; and in the chronicles of Speed and Baker in 1611 and 1630, assumes a somewhat more polished air. In the second edition of Gascoigne's Poems printed in 1587, the editor thought it necessary to explain many of the words by placing more familiar terms in the margin though not much more than twenty years had elapsed from the time of their composition: so rapid were at that time the changes in our language.

My late friend Mr. Tyrwhitt, a man of such candour, accuracy, and profound learning, that his death must be considered as an irreparable loss to literature, was of opinion, that in printing these plays the original spelling should be adhered to, and that we never could be sure of a perfectly faithful edition, unless the first folio copy was made the standard, and actually sent to the press, with such corrections as the editor might think proper. By others it was suggested, that the notes should not be subjoined to the text, but placed at the end of each volume, and that they should be accompanied by a complete Glossary. The former scheme (that of sending the first folio to the press) appeared to me liable to many objections; and I am confident that if the notes were detached from the text, many readers would remain uninformed, rather than undergo the trouble occasioned by perpetual references from one part of a volume to another.

In the present edition I have endeavoured to obtain all the advantages which would have resulted from Mr. Tyrwhitt's plan, without any of its inconveniences. Having often experienced the fallaciousness of collation by the eye, I determined, after I had adjusted the text in the best manner in my power, to have every proof-sheet of my work read aloud to me, while I perused the first folio, for those plays which first appeared in that edition; and for all those which had been previously printed, the first quarto copy, excepting only in the instances of *The Merry Wives of Windsor* and *King Henry V.* which, being either sketches or imperfect copies, could not be wholly relied on; and *King Richard*

*Richard III*⁸. of the earliest edition of which tragedy I was not possessed. I had at the same time before me a table which I had formed of the variations between the quartos and the folio. By this laborious process not a single innovation, made either by the editor of the second folio, or any of the modern editors, could escape me. From the Index to all the words and phrases explained or illustrated in the notes, which I have subjoined to this work⁹, every use may be derived which the most copious Glossary could afford; while those readers who are less intent on philological inquiries, by the notes being appended to the text are relieved from the irksome task of seeking information in a different volume from that immediately before them.

If it be asked, what has been the fruit of all this labour, I answer, that many innovations, transpositions, &c. have been detected by this means; many hundred emen-

⁸ At the time the tragedy of *King Richard III.* was in the press, I was obliged to make use of the *second* edition printed in 1598; but have since been furnished with the edition of 1597, which I have collated *verbatim*, and the most material variations are noticed in the Appendix.

⁹ If the explication of any word or phrase should appear unsatisfactory, the reader, by turning to the Glossarial Index, may know at once whether any additional information has been obtained on the subject. Thus, in *Macbeth*, Vol. IV. p. 392, Dr. Warburton's erroneous interpretation of the word *blood-bolter'd* is inserted; but the true explication of that provincial term may be found in the APPENDIX. So of the phrase, "*Will you take eggs for money*," in *The Winter's Tale*; and some others.

dations have been made¹, and, I trust, a genuine text has been formed. Wherever any deviation is made from the

¹ Left this assertion should be supposed to be made without evidence, I subjoin a list of the restorations made from the original copy, and supported by contemporary usage, in two plays only; *The Winter's Tale*, and *King John*. The lines in the Italick character are exhibited as they appear in the edition of 1778, (as being much more correctly printed than that of 1785,) those in the common character as they appear in the present edition.

THE WINTER'S TALE.

1. " ——— I'll give you my commission,
" To let him there a month. P. 293.
" ——— I'll give him my commission,
" To let him there a month." P. 125.
2. " ——— we know not
" The doctrine of ill-doing, no, nor dream'd—" P. 295.
" ——— we know not
" The doctrine of ill-doing; nor dream'd—" P. 126.
3. " As o'er-dy'd blacks, as winds, as waters;—" P. 300.
" As o'er-dy'd blacks, as wind, as waters;—" P. 130.
4. " As ornament oft does." P. 302.
" As ornaments oft do." P. 130.

The original copy, with a disregard of grammar, reads—
" As ornaments oft does." This inaccuracy has been constantly corrected by every editor wherever it occurs; but the correction should always be made in the verb, and not in the noun.

5. " Have you not—thought (for cogitation
" Resides not in the man that does not think it)
" My wife is slippery?" P. 408.
" Have you not—thought (for cogitation
" Resides not in the man that does not think)
" My wife is slippery?" P. 138.
6. " — wish.

the authentick copies, except in the case of mere obvious errors of the press², the reader is apprized by a note;

6. " ——— wishing clacks more swift?
 " Hours, minutes? the noon midnight? and all eyes,—"
P. 408.
 " ——— wishing clocks more swift?
 " Hours, minutes? noon midnight? and all eyes,—"
P. 139.
 7. " ——— Ay, and thou,—who may'st see
 " How I am gall'd,—thou might'st be-spice a cup,—"
P. 309.
 " ——— Ay, and thou,—who may'st see
 " How I am galled,—might'st be-spice a cup,—" P. 140.
 8. " ——— I'll keep my stable where
 " I lodge my wife;—" P. 325.
 " ——— I'll keep my stables where
 " I lodge my wife;—" P. 153.
 9. " Relish

² That I may be accurately understood, I subjoin a few of these unnoticed corrections:

In *K. Henry VI.* P. I. A& I. sc. vi.

" Thy promises are like Adonis' gardens,

" That one day bloom'd, and fruitful were the next."

The old copy reads—*garden*.

In *K. John*, A& IV. sc. ii.

" ——— that close aspect of his

" Does shew the mood of a much-troubled breast."

The old copy reads—*Do*.

Ibidem, A& I. sc. i.

" 'Tis too respective, and too sociable," &c.

The old copy,—"'Tis *two* respective," &c.

Again,

that there are one hundred thousand lines in these plays,
and that it often was necessary to consult six or seven
volumes,

13. " *You here shall swear upon the sword of justice,—*"
P. 349.

" *You here shall swear upon this sword of justice,—*"
P. 177.

14. " *The session shall proceed.*" P. 349.

" *The sessions shall proceed.*" P. 178.

15. " *Which you knew great ; and to the certain hazard*
Of all incertainties—" P. 350.

" *Which you knew great, and to the hazard*

Of all incertainties—" P. 179.

Some word was undoubtedly omitted at the press ; (probably *fearful* or *doubtful* ;) but I thought it better to exhibit the line in an imperfect state, than to adopt the interpolation made by the editor of the second folio, who has introduced perhaps as unfit a word as could have been chosen.

16. " *Through my dark rust ! and how his piety—*" P. 360.

" *Thorough my rust ! and how his piety—*" P. 179.

The first word of the line is in the old copy by the mistake of the compositor printed *Through*.

17. " *O but, dear fir,—*" P. 375.

" *O but, fir,—*" P. 200.

18. " *Your discontenting father I'll strive to qualify,—*"
P. 401.

" *Your discontenting father strive to qualify,—*" P. 224.

19. " *If I thought it were not a piece of honesty to acquaint*
the king withal, I would do it." P. 407.

" *If I thought it were a piece of honesty to acquaint*
the king withal, I'd not do it." P. 229.

20. " *Dost thou think, for that I insinuate or toze—*" P. 402.

" *Dost thou think, for that I insinuate and toze—*"

P. 231.

second

21. "You might have spoke a thousand things,—" P. 414.
 "You might have *spoken* a thousand things,—" P. 235.
22. "Where we offend her now, appear—" P. 417.
 "Where we *offenders* now appear—" P. 237.
23. "Once more to look on."
 "Sir, by his command,—" P. 420.
 "Once more to look on *him*.
 "By his command,—" P. 240.
24. "—like a weather-beaten conduit." P. 425.
 "—like a weather-bitten conduit." P. 246.
25. "——— This your son-in-law,
 "And son unto the king, who, heavens directing,
 "Is troth-plight to your daughter." P. 437.
 "——— This your son-in-law,
 "And son unto the king, (~~whom~~ heavens directing,)
 "Is troth-plight to your daughter." P. 257.

KING JOHN.

7. "Which fault lies on the hazard of all husbands. P. 10.
"Which fault lies on the bazards of all husbands."
P. 451
2. "'Tis too respective, and too sociable,
"For your conversing." P. 14.
" 'Tis too respective, and too sociable,
"For your conversion." P. 456.
3. "Thus leaning on my elbow,—" P. 16.
"Thus leaning on mine elbow,—" P. 457.
4. "With them a bastard of the king deceas'd." P. 25.
"With them a bastard of the king's deceas'd." P. 464.
5. "That thou hast under-wrought its lawful king." P. 26.
"That thou hast under-wrought his lawful king."
P. 465.
6. "Say

Whenever I mention *the old copy* in my notes, if the play be one originally printed in quarto, I mean the first quarto

17. " *Had none, my lord! why, did not you provoke me?*"
P. 96.
" *Had none, my lord! why, did you not provoke me?*"
P. 536.
18. " *Mad'st it no conscience to destroy a king.*" P. 97.
" *Made it no conscience to destroy a king.*" P. 337.
29. " *Sir, fir, impatience has its privilege.*" P. 102.
" *Sir, fir, impatience has his privilege.*" P. 541.
20. " *Or, when he doom'd this beauty to the grave,—*" P. 102.
" *Or, when he doom'd this beauty to a grave,—*" P. 541.
21. " *To the yet-unbegotten sins of time.*" P. 102.
" *To the yet-unbegotten sin of times.*" P. 541.
22. " *And breathing to this breathless excellence,—*" P. 102.
" *And breathing to his breathless excellence,—*" P. 542.
23. " *And your supplies, which you have wish'd so long,—*"
P. 121.
" *And your supply, which you have wish'd so long,—*"
P. 561.
24. " *What's that to thee? Why may I not demand—*" P. 122.
" *What's that to thee? Why may not I demand—*"
P. 562.
25. " *O, my sweet fir, news fitted to the night.*" P. 123.
" *O, my sweet fir, news fitting to the night.*" P. 563.
26. " *Death, having prey'd upon the outward parts,*
" *Leaves them; invisible his siege is now*
" *Against the mind,—*" P. 124.
" *Death, having prey'd upon the outward parts,*
" *Leaves them invisible; and his siege is now*
" *Against the mind,—*" P. 565.

27. " *The*

quarto copy; if the play appeared originally in folio, I mean the first folio; and when I mention *the old copies*, I mean the first quarto and first folio, which, when that expression is used, it may be concluded, concur in the same reading. In like manner, *the folio* always means the first folio, and *the quarto*, the earliest quarto, with the exceptions already mentioned. In general, however, the date of each quarto is given, when it is cited.

27. “*The salt of them* is hot.” P. 125.

“*The salt in them* is hot.” P. 568.

Two other restorations in this play I have not set down :

“*Before we will lay down our just-borne arms—*”

and

Act II. sc. ii.

“*Be these sad signs confirmers of thy word.*”

Act III. sc. i.

because I pointed them out on a former occasion.

It may perhaps be urged that some of the variations in these lists, are of no great consequence; but to preserve our poet's genuine text is certainly important; for otherwise, as Dr. Johnson has justly observed, “the history of our language will be lost;” and as our poet's words are changed, we are constantly in danger of losing his meaning also. Every reader must wish to peruse what Shakspeare wrote, supported at once by the authority of the authentic copies, and the usage of his contemporaries, rather than what the editor of the second folio, or Pope, or Hanmer, or Warburton, have arbitrarily substituted in its place.

Let me not, however, be misunderstood. *All* these variations have not been discovered by the present collation, some of them having been pointed out by preceding editors; but such as had been already noticed were merely pointed out: the original readings are now established and supported by the usage of our poet himself and that of his contemporaries, and restored to the text, instead of being degraded to the bottom of the page.

Where there are two quarto copies printed in the same year, they are particularly distinguished, and the variations noticed.

The two great duties of an editor are, to exhibit the genuine text of his authour, and to explain his obscurities. Both of these objects have been so constantly before my eyes, that, I am confident, one of them will not be found to have been neglected for the other. I can with perfect truth say, with Dr. Johnson, that “not a single passage in the whole work has appeared to me obscure, which I have not endeavoured to illustrate.” I have examined the notes of all the editors, and my own former remarks, with equal rigour; and have endeavoured as much as possible to avoid all controversy, having constantly had in view a philanthropick observation made by the editor above mentioned: “I know not (says that excellent writer,) why our editors should, with such implacable anger, persecute their predecessors. *Οἱ νεκροὶ μὴ δάκρυον*, the dead, it is true, can make no resistance, they may be attacked with great security; but since they can neither feel nor mend, the safety of mauling them seems greater than the pleasure: nor perhaps would it much misbecome us to remember, amidst our triumphs over the *nonsensical* and the *senseless*, that we likewise are men; that *debemur morti*, and, as Swift observed to Burnet, shall soon be among the dead ourselves.”

I have in general given the true explication of a passage, by whomsoever made, without loading the page with the preceding unsuccessful attempts at elucidation, and by this means have obtained room for much additional illustration: for, as on the one hand, I trust very few
superfluous

superfluous or unnecessary annotations have been admitted, so on the other, I believe, that not a single valuable explication of any obscure passage in these plays has ever appeared, which will not be found in the following volumes.

The admirers of this poet will, I trust, not merely pardon the great accession of new notes in the present edition, but examine them with some degree of pleasure. An idle notion has been propagated, that Shakspeare has been *buried under his commentators*; and it has again and again been repeated by the tasteless and the dull, “that notes, though often necessary, are *necessary evils*.” There is no person, I believe, who has an higher respect for the authority of Dr. Johnson than I have; but he has been misunderstood, or misrepresented, as if these words contained a general caution to *all* the readers of this poet. Dr. Johnson, in the part of his preface here alluded to, is addressing the *young* reader, to whom Shakspeare is *new*; and him he very judiciously counsels to “read every play from the first scene to the last, with utter negligence of all his commentators. —Let him read on, through brightness and obscurity, through integrity and corruption; let him preserve his comprehension of the dialogue, and his interest in the fable.” But to much the greater and more enlightened part of his readers, (for how few are there comparatively to whom Shakspeare is new?) he gives a very different advice: Let them to whom the pleasures of novelty have ceased, “attempt exactness, and read the commentators.”

During the era of conjectural criticism and capricious innovation, notes were indeed evils; while

one page was covered with ingenious sophistry in support of some idle conjecture, and another was wasted in its overthrow, or in erecting a new fabrick equally unsubstantial as the former. But this era is now happily past away; and conjecture and emendation have given place to rational explanation. We shall never, I hope, again be told, that “as the best guesser was the best diviner, so he may be said in some measure to be the best editor of Shakspeare³.” Let me not, however, be supposed an enemy to all conjectural emendation; sometimes undoubtedly we must have recourse to it; but, like the machinery of the ancient drama, let it not be resorted to except in cases of difficulty; *nisi dignus vindice nodus*. “I wish (says Dr. Johnson,) we all conjectured less, and explained more.” When our poet’s entire library shall have been discovered, and the fables of all his plays traced to their original source, when every temporary allusion shall have been pointed out, and every obscurity elucidated, then, and not till then, let the accumulation of notes be complained of. I scarcely remember ever to have looked into a book of the age of Queen Elizabeth, in which I did not find somewhat that tended to throw a light on these plays. While our object is, to support and establish what the poet wrote, to illustrate his phraseology by comparing it with that of his contemporaries, and to explain his fugitive allusions to customs long since disused and forgotten, while this object is kept steadily in view, if even every line of his plays were accompanied with a comment, every intelligent reader would be indebted to the industry of him who produced it. Such uniformly

³ Newton’s Preface to his edition of Milton.

has been the object of the notes now presented to the publick. Let us then hear no more of this barbarous jargon concerning Shakspeare's having been *elucidated* into *obscurity*, and buried under the load of his commentators. Dryden is said to have regretted the success of his own instructions, and to have lamented that at length, in consequence of his critical prefaces, the town had become too skilful to be easily satisfied. The same observation may be made with respect to many of these objectors, to whom the meaning of some of our poet's most difficult passages is now become so familiar, that they fancy they originally understood them "without a prompter;" and with great gravity exclaim against the unnecessary illustrations furnished by his Editors: nor ought we much to wonder at this; for our poet himself has told us,

" ————— 'tis a common proof,
 " That lowliness is young ambition's ladder,
 " Whereto the climber upward turns his face;
 " But when he once attains the upmost round,
 " He then unto the ladder turns his back;
 " Looks in the clouds."—

I have constantly made it a rule in revising the notes of former editors, to compare such passages as they have cited from any authour, with the book from which the extract was taken, if I could procure it; by which some inaccuracies have been rectified. The incorrect extract made by Dr. Warburton from Saviolo's treatise on *Honour and Honourable Quarrels*, to illustrate a passage in *As you like it*, fully proves the propriety of such a collation.

At the end of the tenth volume I have added an Appendix, containing corrections, and supplemental observations,

observations, made too late to be annexed to the plays to which they belong. Some object to an Appendix ; but, in my opinion, with very little reason. No book can be the worse for such a supplement ; since the reader, if such be his caprice, need not examine it. If the objector means, that he wishes that all the information contained in an Appendix, were properly disposed in the preceding volumes, it must be acknowledged that such an arrangement would be extremely desirable : but as well might he require from the elephant the sprightliness and agility of the squirrel, or from the squirrel the wisdom and strength of the elephant, as expect, that an editor's latest thoughts, suggested by discursive reading while the sheets that compose his volumes were passing through the press, should form a part of his original work ; that information acquired too late to be employed in its proper place, should yet be found there.

That the very few stage-directions which the old copies exhibit, were not taken from our authour's manuscripts, but furnished by the players, is proved by one in *Macbeth*, Act IV. sc. i. where "*A shew of eight kings*" is directed, "*and Banquo last, with a glass in his hand;*" though from the very words which the poet has written for Macbeth, it is manifest that the glass ought to be borne by the eighth king, and not by Banquo. All the stage-directions therefore throughout this work I have considered as wholly in my power, and have regulated them in the best manner I could. The reader will also, I think, be pleased to find the place in which every scene is supposed to pass, precisely ascertained : a species of information, for which, though it often throws light on the dialogue, we look in vain in the
ancient

ancient copies, and which has been too much neglected by the modern editors.

The play of *Pericles, Prince of Tyre*, which is now once more restored to our authour, I originally intended to have subjoined, with *Titus Andronicus*, to the tenth volume; but, to preserve an equality of size in my volumes, have been obliged to give it a different place. The hand of Shakspeare being indubitably found in that piece, it will, I doubt not, be considered as a valuable accession; and it is of little consequence where it appears.

It has long been thought that *Titus Andronicus* was not written originally by Shakspeare; about seventy years after his death, Ravenscroft having mentioned that he had been “told by some anciently conversant with the stage, that our poet only gave some master-touches to one or two of the principal parts or characters.” The very curious papers lately discovered in Dulwich College, from which large extracts are given at the end of the History of the Stage, prove, what I long since suspected, that this play, and *the First Part of K. Henry VI.* were in possession of the scene when Shakspeare began to write for the stage; and the same manuscripts shew, that it was then very common for a dramattick poet to alter and amend the work of a preceding writer. The question therefore is now decisively settled; and undoubtedly some additions were made to both these pieces by Shakspeare. It is observable that the second scene of the third act of *Titus Andronicus* is not found in the quarto copy printed in 1611. It is therefore highly probable that this scene was added by our authour;

authour; and his hand may be traced in the preceding act, as well as in a few other places⁴. The additions which he made to *Pericles* are much more numerous, and therefore more strongly entitle it to a place among the dramattick pieces which he has adorned by his pen.

With respect to the other contested plays, *Sir John Oldcastle*, *The London Prodigal*, &c. which have now for near two centuries been falsely ascribed to our authour, the manuscripts above mentioned completely clear him from that imputation; and prove, that while his great modesty made him set but little value on his own inimitable productions, he could patiently endure to have the miserable trash of other writers publicly imputed to him, without taking any measure to vindicate his fame. *Sir John Oldcastle*, we find from indubitable evidence, though ascribed in the title-page to “William Shakspeare,” and printed in the year 1600, when his fame was in its meridian, was the joint-production of four other poets; Michael Drayton, Anthony Mundy, Richard Hathwaye, and Robert Wilfon⁵.

In the Dissertation annexed to the three parts of *King Henry the Sixth*, I have discussed at large the question concerning their authenticity; and have assigned my reasons for thinking that the second and third of those plays were formed by Shakspeare on two elder dramas

⁴ If ever the account-book of Mr. Heminge shall be discovered, we shall probably find in it—“Paid to William Shakspeare for mending *Titus Andronicus*.” See Vol. I. Part II. p. 320.

⁵ Vol. I. Part II. *Emendations and Additions*, p. 317.

now extant. Any disquisition therefore concerning these controverted pieces is here unnecessary.

Some years ago I published a short Essay on the economy and usages of our old theatres. The Historical Account of the English Stage; which has been formed on that essay, has swelled to such a size, in consequence of various researches since made, and a great accession of very valuable materials, that it is become almost a new work. Of these the most important are the curious papers which have been discovered at Dulwich, and the very valuable Office-book of Sir Henry Herbert, Master of the Revels to King James and King Charles the First, which have contributed to throw much light on our dramattick history, and furnished some singular anecdotes of the poets of those times.

Twelve years have elapsed since the Essay on the order of time in which the plays of Shakspeare were written, first appeared. A re-examination of these plays since that time has furnished me with several particulars in confirmation of what I had formerly suggested on this subject. On a careful revisal of that Essay, which, I hope, is improved as well as considerably enlarged, I had the satisfaction of observing that I had found reason to attribute but two plays to an era widely distant from that to which they had been originally ascribed; and to make only a minute change in the arrangement of a few others. Some information, however, which has been obtained since that Essay was printed in its present form, inclines me to think that one of the two plays which I allude to, *The Winter's Tale*, was a still later production than I have supposed; for I have now good reason to believe that

that it was first exhibited in the year 1613⁴; and that consequently it must have been one of our poet's latest works.

Though above a century and a half has elapsed since the death of Shakspeare, it is somewhat extraordinary, (as I observed on a former occasion,) that none of his various editors should have attempted to separate his genuine poetical compositions from the spurious performances with which they have been long intermixed; or have taken the trouble to compare them with the earliest and most authentick copies. Shortly after his death a very incorrect impression of his poems was issued out, which in every subsequent edition, previous to the year 1780, was implicitly followed. They have been carefully revised, and with many additional illustrations are now a second time faithfully printed from the original copies, excepting only *Venus and Adonis*, of which I have not been able to procure the first impression. The second edition, printed in 1596, was obligingly transmitted to me by the late Reverend Thomas Warton, of whose friendly and valuable correspondence I was deprived by death, when these volumes were almost ready to be issued from the press. It is painful to recollect how many of (I had almost said) my coadjutors have died since the present work was begun:—the elegant scholar, and ingenious writer, whom I have just mentioned; Dr. Johnson, and Mr. Tyrwhitt: men, from whose approbation of my labours I had promised myself much pleasure, and whose stamp could give a value and currency to any work.

⁴ See *Emendations and Additions*, Vol. I. Part II. p. 286.

With the materials which I have been so fortunate as to obtain, relative to our poet, his kindred, and friends, it would not have been difficult to have formed a new Life of Shakspeare, less meagre and imperfect than that left us by Mr. Rowe: but the information which I have procured having been obtained at very different times, it is necessarily dispersed, partly in the copious notes subjoined to Rowe's Life, and partly in the Historical Account of our old actors. At some future time I hope to weave the whole into one uniform and connected narrative.

My inquiries having been carried on almost to the very moment of publication, some circumstances relative to our poet were obtained too late to be introduced into any part of the present work. Of these due use will be made hereafter.

The prefaces of Theobald, Hanmer, and Warburton, I have not retained, because they appeared to me to throw no light on our authour or his works: the room which they would have taken up, will, I trust, be found occupied by more valuable matter.

As some of the preceding editors have justly been condemned for innovation, so perhaps (for of objections there is no end,) I may be censured for too strict an adherence to the ancient copies. I have constantly had in view the Roman sentiment adopted by Dr. Johnson, that "it is more honourable to save a citizen than to destroy an enemy," and, like him, "have been more careful to protect than to attack." "I do not wish the reader to forget, (says the same writer,) that the most commodious

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commodious (and he might have added, the most forcible and elegant) is not always the true reading⁶." On this principle I have uniformly proceeded, having resolved never to deviate from the authentick copies, merely because the phraseology was harsh or uncommon. Many passages, which have heretofore been considered as corrupt, and are now supported by the usage of contemporary writers, fully prove the propriety of this caution⁷.

⁶ *K. Henry IV.* P. II.

⁷ See particularly *The Merchant of Venice*, Vol. III. p. 46 :

" ——— That many may be meant

" By the fool multitude."

with the note there, and in the Appendix, p. 581.

We undoubtedly should not now write—

" But, lest myself be guilty to self-wrong,—"

yet we find this phrase in *The Comedy of Errors*, Vol. II. p. 171, and it is supported by our poet's own authority in the Appendix, p. 569. See also *The Winter's Tale*, Vol. IV. p. 257 :

" ——— This your son-in-law,

" And son unto the king, (*whom* heavens directing,)

" Is troth-plight to your daughter."

Measure for Measure, Vol. II. p. 96 : " — to be so bared,—."

Coriolanus, Vol. VII. p. 239, n. 5 ; and Appendix, p. 662 :

" Which often, thus, correcting thy stout heart," &c.

Hamlet, Vol. IX. p. 204 :

" That he might not *beteem* the winds of heaven," &c.

As you like it, Vol. III. p. 154, n. 7 ; and Appendix, p. 587 :

" My voice is *ragged*,—."

Cymbeline, Vol. VIII. p. 472, n. 3 :

" Whom heavens, in justice, (both on her and hers,)

" Have laid most heavy hand."

The

The rage for innovation till within these last thirty years was so great, that many words were dismissed from our poet's text, which in his time were current in every mouth. In all the editions since that of Mr. Rowe, in the Second Part of *King Henry IV.* the word *channel*⁷ has been rejected, and *kennel* substituted in its room, though the former term was commonly employed in the same sense in the time of our authour; and the learned Bishop of Worcester has strenuously endeavoured to prove that in *Cymbeline* the poet wrote—not *shakes*, but *shuts*, or *checks*, “all our buds from growing⁸”; though the authenticity of the original reading is established beyond all controversy by two other passages of Shakspeare. Very soon, indeed, after his death, this rage for innovation seems to have seized his editors; for in the year 1616 an edition of his *Rape of Lucrece* was published, which was said to be *newly revised and corrected*; but in which, in fact, several arbitrary changes were made, and the ancient diction rejected for one somewhat more modern. Even in the first complete collection of his plays published in 1623, some changes were undoubtedly made from ignorance of his meaning and phraseology. They had, I suppose, been made in the play-house copies after his retirement from the theatre. Thus

⁷ A& II. sc. i. “—throw the quean in the *channel*.”

In that passage, as in many others, I have silently restored the original reading, without any observation; but the word, in this sense, being now obsolete, should have been illustrated by a note. This defect, however, will be found remedied in *King Henry VI.* P. II. A& II. sc. ii.

“As if a *channel* should be call'd the sea.”

⁸ Hurd's HOR. 4th edit, Vol. I. p. 55.

in *Othello*, Brabantio is made to call to his domesticks to raise "some special officers of *might*," instead of "officers of *night*;" and the phrase "*of all loves*," in the same play, not being understood, "*for love's sake*" was substituted in its room. So, in *Hamlet*, we have *ere ever* for *or ever*, and *rites* instead of the more ancient word, *crants*. In *King Lear*, Act I. sc. i. the substitution of—"Goes thy heart with this?" instead of—"Goes this with thy heart?" without doubt arose from the same cause. In the plays of which we have no quarto copies, we may be sure that similar innovations were made, though we have now no certain means of detecting them.

After what has been proved concerning the sophistications and corruptions of the Second Folio, we cannot be surpris'd that when these plays were re-published by Mr. Rowe in the beginning of this century from a later folio, in which the interpolations of the former were all preserved, and many new errors added, almost every page of his work was disfigured by accumulated corruptions. In Mr. Pope's edition our authour was not less misrepresented; for though by examining the oldest copies he detected some errors, by his numerous fanciful alterations the poet was so completely modernized, that I am confident, had he "*re-visited the glimpses of the moon*," he would not have understood his own works. From the quartos indeed a few valuable restorations were made; but all the advantage that was thus obtained, was outweighed by arbitrary changes, transpositions, and interpolations.

The readers of Shakspeare being disgusted with the liberties taken by Mr. Pope, the subsequent edition of Theobald was justly preferred; because he professed to
adhere

adhere to the ancient copies more strictly than his competitor, and illustrated a few passages by extracts from the writers of our poet's age. That his work should at this day be considered of any value, only shews how long impressions will remain, when they are once made; for Theobald, though not so great an innovator as Pope, was yet a considerable innovator; and his edition being printed from that of his immediate predecessor, while a few arbitrary changes made by Pope were detected, innumerable sophistifications were silently adopted. His knowledge of the contemporary authours was so scanty, that all the illustration of that kind dispersed throughout his volumes, has been exceeded by the researches which have since been made for the purpose of elucidating a single play.

Of Sir Thomas Hanmer it is only necessary to say, that he adopted almost all the innovations of Pope, adding to them whatever caprice dictated.

To him succeeded Dr. Warburton, a critick, who (as hath been said of Salmasius) seems to have erected his throne on a heap of stones, that he might have them at hand to throw at the heads of all those who passed by. His unbounded licence in substituting his own chimerical conceits in the place of the authour's genuine text, has been so fully shewn by his revisers, that I suppose no critical reader will ever again open his volumes. An hundred strappadoes, according to an Italian comick writer, would not have induced Petrarch, were he living, to subscribe to the meaning which certain commentators after his death had by their glosses extorted from his works. It is a curious speculation to consider how many thousand would have been requisite

for this editor to have inflicted on our great dramatick poet for the same purpose. The defence which has been made for Dr. Warburton on this subject, by some of his friends, is singular. "He well knew," it has been said, "that much the greater part of his notes do not throw any light on the poet of whose works he undertook the revision, and that he frequently imputed to Shakspeare a meaning of which he never thought; but the editor's great object was to display his own learning, not to illustrate his authour, and this end he attained; for in spite of all the clamour against him, his work added to his reputation as a scholar."—Be it so then; but let none of his admirers ever dare to unite his name with that of Shakspeare; and let us at least be allowed to wonder, that the learned editor should have had so little respect for the greatest poet that has appeared since the days of Homer, as to use a commentary on his works merely as "*a stalking-horse, under the presentation of which he might shoot his wit.*"

At length the task of revising these plays was undertaken by one, whose extraordinary powers of mind, as they rendered him the admiration of his contemporaries, will transmit his name to posterity as the brightest ornament of the eighteenth century; and will transmit it without competition, if we except a great orator, philosopher, and statesman², now living, whose talents and virtues are an honour to human nature. In 1765 Dr. Johnson's edition, which had long been impatiently expected, was given to the publick. His admirable preface, (perhaps the finest composition in our language,)

² The Right Honourable Edmund Burke.

his happy, and in general just, characters of these plays, his refutation of the false glosses of Theobald and Warburton, and his numerous explications of involved and difficult passages, are too well known, to be here enlarged upon; and therefore I shall only add, that his vigorous and comprehensive understanding threw more light on his authour than all his predecessors had done.

In one observation, however, concerning our poet, I do not entirely concur with him. "It is not (he remarks) very grateful to consider how little the succession of editors has added to this authour's power of pleasing. He was read, admired, studied, and imitated, while he was yet deformed with all the improprieties which ignorance and neglect could accumulate upon him."

He certainly was read, admired, studied, and imitated, at the period mentioned; but surely not in the same degree as at present. The succession of editors has effected this; it has made him understood; it has made him popular; it has shewn every one who is capable of reading, how much superior he is not only to Jonson and Fletcher, whom the bad taste of the last age from the time of the Restoration to the end of the century set above him, but to all the dramatick poets of antiquity:

" ——— *Jam monte potitus,*

" *Ridet anhelantem dura ad vestigia turbam.*"

Every authour who pleases must surely please more as he is more understood, and there can be no doubt that Shakspeare is now infinitely better understood than he was in the last century. To say nothing of the people at large, it is clear that Dryden himself, though a great

admirer of our poet, and D'Avenant, though he wrote for the stage in the year 1627, did not always understand him¹. The very books which are necessary to our authour's

¹ "The tongue in general is so much refined since Shakspeare's time, that many of his words, and more of his phrases, are *scarce intelligible*." Preface to Dryden's *Troilus and Cressida*. The various changes made by Dryden in particular passages in that play, and by him and D'Avenant in the *Tempest*, prove decisively that they frequently did not understand our poet's language.

In his Defence of the Epilogue to the *Conquest of Granada*, Dryden arraigns Ben Jonson for using the personal, instead of the neutral, pronoun, and *unfear'd* for *unafraid*:

"Though heaven should speak with all *his* wrath at once,
"We should stand upright, and *unfear'd*."

"*His* (says he) is ill syntax with *heaven*, and by *unfear'd* he means *unafraid*; words of a quite contrary signification.—He perpetually uses *ports* for *gates*, which is an affected error in him, to introduce Latin by the loss of the English idiom."

Now *his* for *its*, however ill the syntax may be, was the common language of the time; and to *fear*, in the sense of to *terrify*, is found not only in all the poets, but in every dictionary of that age. With respect to *ports*, Shakspeare who will not be suspected of affecting Latinisms, frequently employs that word in the same sense as Jonson has done, and as probably the whole kingdom did; for the word is still so used in Scotland.

D'Avenant's alteration of *Macbeth*, and *Measure for Measure*, furnish many proofs of the same kind. In *The Law against Lovers*, which he formed on *Much ado about nothing* and *Measure for Measure*, are these lines:

"—— nor do I think,
"The prince has *true* discretion who affects it."

The

author's illustration, were of so little account in their time, that what now we can scarce procure at any price, was then the furniture of the nursery or the stall². In fifty years after our poet's death, Dryden mentions

The passage imitated is in *Measure for Measure*:

"Nor do I think the man of *safe* discretion,
"That does affect it."

If our poet's language had been well understood, the epithet *safe* would not have been rejected. See *Othello*:

"My blood begins my *safer* guides to rule;
"And passion, having my best judgment collied," &c.

So also Edgar, in *King Lear*:

"The *safer sense* will ne'er accommodate
"His master thus."

² The price of books at different periods may serve in some measure to ascertain the taste and particular study of the age. At the sale of Dr. Francis Bernard's library in 1698, the following books were sold at the annexed prices:

F O L I O.

Gower de Confessione Amantis. - - o. 2. 6.
Now sold for two guineas.

Caxton's Recueyll of the histories of Troy, 1502. o. 3. o.

—— Chronicle of England. - - - o. 4. o.

Hall's Chronicle. - - - o. 6. 4.

Grafton's Chronicle. - - - o. 6. 10.

Holinshed's Chronicle, 1587. - - - 1. 10. 6.

This book is now frequently sold for ten guineas.

Q U A R T O.

Turberville on hawking and hunting. - - o. o. 6.

Copley's Wits, Fits, and Fancies. - - o. o. 4.

Puttenham's Art of English Poesie. - - o. o. 4.

This book is now usually sold for a guinea.

mentions that he was then become “*a little obsolete.*” In the beginning of the present century Lord Shaftesbury complains of his “*rude unpolished stile, and his ANTIQUATED phrase and wit;*” and not long afterwards Gildon informs us that he had been rejected from some modern collections of poetry on account of his *obsolete language*. Whence could these representations have proceeded, but because our poet, not being diligently studied, not being compared with the contemporary writers, was not understood? If he had been “read, admired, studied, and imitated,” in the same degree as he is now, the enthusiasm of some one or other of his admirers in the last age would have induced him to make some inquiries concerning the history of his theatrical career, and the anecdotes of his private life. But no such person was found; no anxiety in the publick sought out any particulars concerning him after the Restoration, (if we except the few which were collected by Mr. Aubrey,) though at that time the history of his life must have been known to many; for his sister Joan Hart, who must have known much of his early years, did not die till 1646: his favourite daughter, Mrs. Hall, lived till 1649; and his second daughter, Judith, was living at Stratford-upon-Avon in the beginning of the year

Powel's History of Wales. - - - o. 1. 5.

Painter's second tome of the Palace of Pleasure. o. o. 4.

The two volumes of Painter's Palace of Pleasure are now usually sold for three guineas.

O C T A V O.

Metamorphosis of Ajax, by Sir John Harrington. - - - - -

o. o. 4.

1662.

1662. His grand-daughter, Lady Barnard, did not die till 1670. Mr. Thomas Combe, to whom Shakspeare bequeathed his sword, survived our poet above forty years, having died at Stratford in 1657. His elder brother William Combe lived till 1667. Sir Richard Bishop, who was born in 1585, lived at Bridgetown near Stratford till 1672; and his son Sir William Bishop, who was born in 1626, died there in 1700. From all these persons without doubt many circumstances relative to Shakspeare might have been obtained; but that was an age as deficient in literary curiosity as in taste.

It is remarkable that in a century after our poet's death, five editions only of his plays were published; which probably consisted of not more than three thousand copies. During the same period three editions of the plays of Fletcher, and four of those of Jonson, had appeared. On the other hand, from the year 1716 to the present time, that is, in seventy-four years, but two editions of the former writer, and one of the latter, have been issued from the press; while above thirty thousand copies of Shakspeare have been dispersed through England³. That nearly as many editions of the

³ Notwithstanding our high admiration of Shakspeare, we are yet without a splendid edition of his works, with the illustrations which the united efforts of various commentators have contributed; while in other countries the most brilliant decorations have been lavished on their distinguished poets. The editions of Pope and Hanmer, may, with almost as much propriety, be called *their* works, as those of Shakspeare; and therefore can have no claim to be admitted into any elegant library. Nor will the promised edition, with engravings, undertaken by Mr. Alderman Boydell, remedy this defect, for it is not to be

the works of Jonson as of Shakspeare should have been demanded in the last century, will not appear surprizing, when we recollect what Dryden has related soon after the Restoration: that “others were then generally preferred before him⁴.” By *others* Jonson and Fletcher were meant. To attempt to shew to the readers of the

be accompanied with notes. At some future, and no very distant, time, I mean to furnish the publick with an elegant edition in quarto, (without engravings,) in which the text of the present edition shall be followed, with the illustrations subjoined in the same page.

4 In the year 1642, whether from some capricious vicissitude in the publick taste, or from a general inattention to the drama, we find Shirley complaining that few came to see our authour’s performances:

“ ————— You see

“ What audience we have: *what company*

“ *To Shakspeare comes?* whose mirth did once beguile

“ Dull hours, and buskin’d made even sorrow smile;

“ So lovely were the wounds, that men would say

“ They could endure the bleeding a whole day;

“ *He has but few friends lately.*”

Prologue to *The Sisters*,

“ Shakspeare to thee was dull, whose best jest lies

“ I’t’h’ lady’s questions, and the fool’s replies;

“ Old-fashion’d wit, which walk’d from town to town,

“ In trunk-hose, which our fathers call’d the clown;

“ Whose wit our nicer times would obsceneness call,

“ And which made bawdry pass for comical.

“ Nature was all his art; thy vein was free

“ As his, but without his scurrility.”

Verbes on Fletcher, by William Cartwright, 1647.

After the Restoration, on the revival of the theatres, the plays of Beaumont and Fletcher were esteemed so much superior to those of our authour, that we are told by Dryden, “two

the present day the absurdity of such a preference. would be an insult to their understandings. When we

of their pieces were acted, through the year, for one of Shakspeare's." If his testimony needed any corroboration, the following verses would afford it:

- " In our old plays, the humour, love, and passion,
- " Like doublet, hose, and cloak, are out of fashion ;
- " That which the world call'd wit in Shakspeare's age,
- " Is laugh'd at, as improper for our stage."

Prologue to Shirley's *Love Tricks*, 1667.

- " At every shop, while *Shakspeare's* lofty stile
- " Neglected lies, to mice and worms a spoil,
- " Gilt on the back, just smoking from the press,
- " The apprentice shews you D'Urfey's *Hudibras*,
- " Crown's *Mask*, bound up with Settle's choicest labours,
- " And promises some new essay of Babor's."

SATIRE, published in 1680.

- " — against old as well as new to rage,
- " Is the peculiar frenzy of this age.
- " Shakspeare must down, and you must praise no more
- " Soft Desdemona, nor the jealous Moor :
- " Shakspeare, whose fruitful genius, happy wit,
- " Was fram'd and finish'd at a lucky hit,
- " The pride of nature, and the shame of schools,
- " Born to create, and not to learn from, rules,
- " Must please no more : his bastards now deride
- " Their father's nakedness they ought to hide."

Prologue by Sir Charles Sedley, to the *Wary Widow*, 1693.

To the honour of Margaret Duchess of Newcastle be it remembered, that however fantastick in other respects, she had taste enough to be fully sensible of our poet's merit, and was one of the first who after the Restoration published a very high eulogy on him. See her *Sociable Letters*, folio, 1664, p. 244. endeavour

endeavour to trace any thing like a ground for this preposterous taste, we are told of Fletcher's *ease*, and Jonson's *learning*. Of how little use his learning was to him, an ingenious writer of our own time has shewn with that vigour and animation for which he was distinguished. "Jonson, in the serious drama, is as much an imitator, as Shakspeare is an original. He was very learned, as Sampson was very strong, to his own hurt. Blind to the nature of tragedy, he pulled down all antiquity on his head, and buried himself under it. We see nothing of Jonson, nor indeed of his admired (but also murdered) ancients; for what shone in the historian is a cloud on the poet, and *Catiline* might have been a good play, if Sallust had never written.

"Who knows whether Shakspeare might not have thought less, if he had read more? Who knows if he might not have laboured under the load of Jonson's learning, as Enceladus under *Ætna*? His mighty genius, indeed, through the most mountainous oppression would have breathed out some of his inextinguishable fire; yet possibly he might not have risen up into that giant, that much more than common man, at which we now gaze with amazement and delight. Perhaps he was as learned as his dramattick province required; for whatever other learning he wanted, he was master of two books unknown to many of the profoundly read, though books which the last conflagration alone can destroy; the book of nature, and that of man⁵."

⁵ *Conjectures on Original Composition*, by Dr. Edward Young.

To this and the other encomiums on our great poet which will be found in the following pages, I shall not attempt to make any addition. He has justly observed, that

- “ To guard a title that was rich before,
- “ To gild refined gold, to paint the lily,
- “ To throw a perfume on the violet,
- “ To smooth the ice, or add another hue
- “ Unto the rainbow, or with taper-light
- “ To seek the beauteous eye of heaven to garnish,
- “ Is wasteful and ridiculous excess.”

Let me, however, be permitted to remark, that beside all his other transcendent merits, he was the great refiner and polisher of our language. His compound epithets, his bold metaphors, the energy of his expressions, the harmony of his numbers, all these render the language of Shakspeare one of his principal beauties. Unfortunately none of his letters, or other prose compositions, not in a dramatick form, have reached posterity; but if any of them ever shall be discovered, they will, I am confident, exhibit the same perspicuity, the same cadence, the same elegance and vigour, which we find in his plays. “ Words and phrases,” says Dryden, “ must of necessity receive a change in succeeding ages; but it is almost a miracle, that much of his language remains so pure; and that he who began dramatick poetry amongst us, untaught by any, and, as Ben Jonson tells us, without learning, should by the force of his own genius perform so much, that in a manner he has left no praise for any who come after him.”

In these prefatory observations my principal object was, to ascertain the true state and respective value of the ancient copies, and to mark out the course which has been pursued in the edition now offered to the publick. It only remains, that I should return my very sincere acknowledgments to those gentlemen, to whose good offices I have been indebted in the progress of my work. My thanks are particularly due to Francis Ingram, of Ribbisford in Worcestershire, Esq. for the very valuable Office-book of Sir Henry Herbert, and several other curious papers which formerly belonged to that gentleman; to Penn Asheton Curzon, Esq. for the use of the very rare copy of *King Richard III.* printed in 1597; to the Master, and the Rev. Mr. Smith, librarian, of Dulwich College, for the Manuscripts relative to one of our ancient theatres, which they obligingly transmitted to me; to John Kipling, Esq. keeper of the rolls in Chancery, who in the most liberal manner directed every search to be made in the Chapel of the Rolls that I should require, with a view to illustrate the history of our poet's life; and to Mr. Richard Clarke, Registrar of the diocese of Worcester, who with equal liberality, at my request, made many searches in his office for the wills of various persons. I am also in a particular manner indebted to the kindness and attention of the Rev. Mr. Davenport, Vicar of Stratford-upon-Avon, who most obligingly made every inquiry in that town and the neighbourhood, which I suggested as likely to throw any light on the Life of Shakspeare.

I deliver

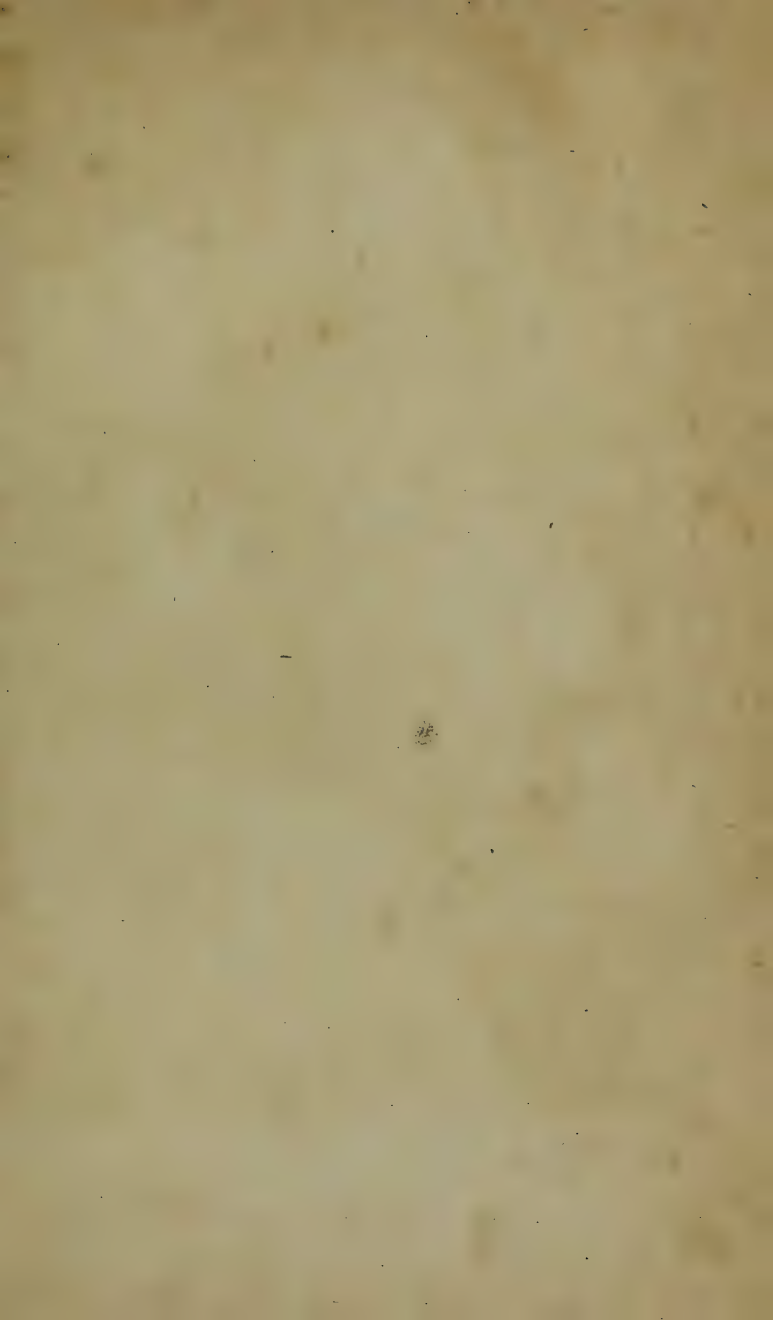
I deliver my book to the world not without anxiety ; conscious, however, that I have strenuously endeavoured to render it not unworthy the attention of the publick. If the researches which have been made for the illustration of our poet's works, and for the dissertations which accompany the present edition, shall afford as much entertainment to others, as I have derived from them, I shall consider the time expended on it as well employed. Of the dangerous ground on which I tread, I am fully sensible. “ Multa sunt in his studiis (to use the words of a venerable fellow-labourer⁶ in the mines of Antiquity) *cineri supposita doloso*. Errata possint esse multa à memoria. Quis enim in memoriæ thesauro omnia simul sic complectatur, ut pro arbitrato suo possit expromere ? Errata possint esse plura ab imperitia. Quis enim tam peritus, ut in cæco hoc antiquitatis mari, cum tempore colluctatus, scopulis non allidatur ? Hæc tamen à te, humanissime lector, tua humanitas, mea industria, patriæ charitas, et SHAKSPEARI dignitas, mihi exorent, ut quid mei sit judicii, sine aliorum præjudicio libere proferam ; ut eâdem via qua alii in his studiis solent, insistam ; et ut erratis, si ego agnoscam, tu ignoscas.” Those who are the warmest admirers of our great poet, and most conversant with his writings, best know the difficulty of such a work, and will be most ready to pardon its defects ; remembering, that in all arduous undertakings it is easier to conceive than to accomplish ; that “ the will is infinite, and the execution confined ; that the desire is boundless, and the act a slave to limit.”

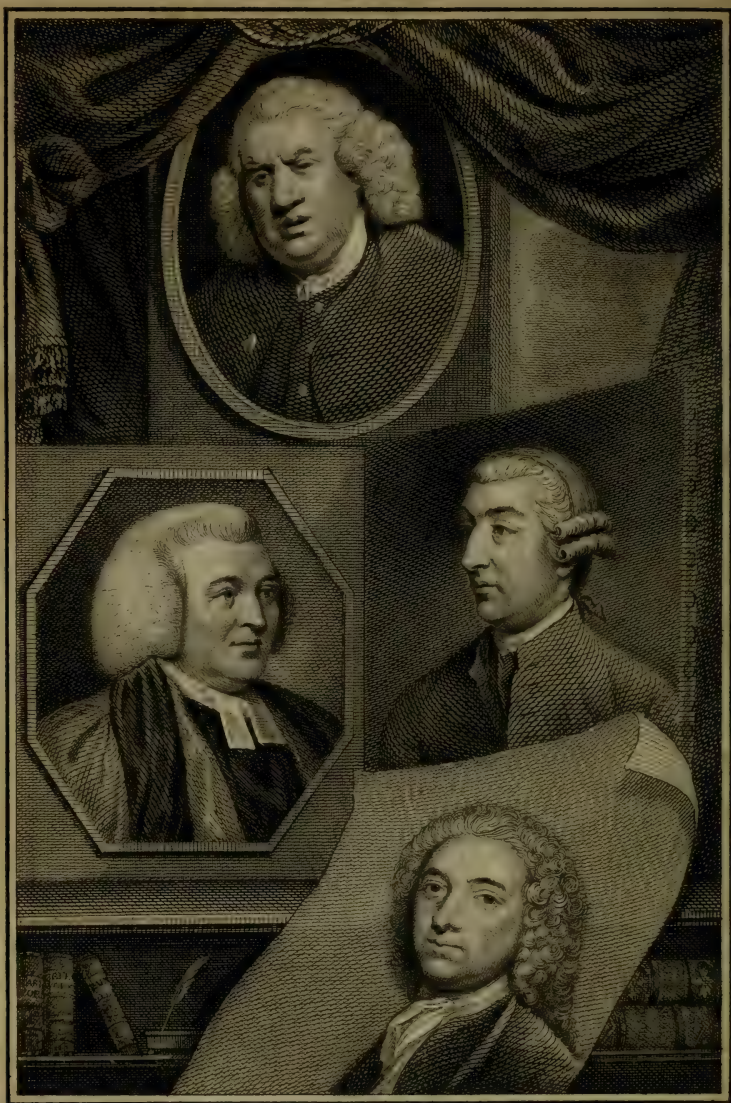
QUEEN-ANNE-STREET, EAST,

October 25, 1790.

⁶ Camden.







Engraved by Tho. Hollaway.

SAMUEL JOHNSON, L.L.D. RICHARD FARMER, D.D.

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DR. JOHNSON'S

P R E F A C E*.

THAT praises are without reason lavished on the dead, and that the honours due only to excellence are paid to antiquity, is a complaint likely to be always continued by those, who, being able to add nothing to truth, hope for eminence from the heresies of paradox; or those, who, being forced by disappointment upon consolatory expedients, are willing to hope from posterity what the present age refuses, and flatter themselves that the regard, which is yet denied by envy, will be at last bestowed by time.

Antiquity, like every other quality that attracts the notice of mankind, has undoubtedly votaries that reverence it, not from reason, but from prejudice. Some seem to admire indiscriminately whatever has been long preserved, without considering that time has sometimes co-operated with chance; all perhaps are more willing to honour past than present excellence; and the mind contemplates genius through the shades of age, as the eye surveys the sun through artificial opacity. The great contention of criticism is to find the faults of the moderns, and the beauties of the ancients. While an author is yet living, we estimate his powers by his worst performance; and when he is dead, we rate them by his best.

To works, however, of which the excellence is not absolute and definite, but gradual and comparative; to works not raised upon principles demonstrative and scientific, but appealing wholly to observation and experience, no other test can be applied than length of duration and continuance of esteem. What mankind have long possessed they have often examined and compared,

* First printed in 1765.

VOL. I.

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and

and if they persist to value the possession, it is because frequent comparisons have confirmed opinion in its favour. As among the works of nature no man can properly call a river deep, or a mountain high, without the knowledge of many mountains, and many rivers; so in the productions of genius, nothing can be stiled excellent till it has been compared with other works of the same kind. Demonstration immediately displays its power, and has nothing to hope or fear from the flux of years; but works tentative and experimental must be estimated by their proportion to the general and collective ability of man, as it is discovered in a long succession of endeavours. Of the first building that was raised, it might be with certainty determined that it was round or square; but whether it was spacious or lofty must have been referred to time. The Pythagorean scale of numbers was at once discovered to be perfect; but the poems of Homer we yet know not, to transcend the common limits of human intelligence, but by remarking, that nation after nation, and century after century, has been able to do little more than transpose his incidents, new name his characters, and paraphrase his sentiments.

The reverence due to writings that have long subsisted arises therefore not from any credulous confidence in the superior wisdom of past ages, or gloomy persuasion of the degeneracy of mankind, but is the consequence of acknowledged and indubitable positions, that what has been longest known has been most considered, and what is most considered is best understood.

The poet, of whose works I have undertaken the revision, may now begin to assume the dignity of an ancient, and claim the privilege of established fame and prescriptive veneration. He has long outlived his century, the term commonly fixed as the test of literary merit. Whatever advantages he might once derive from personal allusions, local customs, or temporary opinions, have for many years been lost; and every topick of merriment, or motive of sorrow, which the modes of artificial life afforded him, now only obscure the scenes which they once illuminated. The effects of favour and competition

tion are at an end; the tradition of his friendships and his enmities has perished; his works support no opinion with arguments, nor supply any faction with invectives; they can neither indulge vanity, nor gratify malignity; but are read without any other reason than the desire of pleasure, and are therefore praised only as pleasure is obtained; yet thus unassisted by interest or passion, they have past through variations of taste and changes of manners, and, as they devolved from one generation to another, have received new honours at every transmission.

But because human judgment, though it be gradually gaining upon certainty, never becomes infallible; and approbation, though long continued, may yet be only the approbation of prejudice or fashion; it is proper to inquire, by what peculiarities of excellence Shakspeare has gained and kept the favour of his countrymen.

Nothing can please many, and please long, but just representations of general nature. Particular manners can be known to few, and therefore few only can judge how nearly they are copied. The irregular combinations of fanciful invention may delight awhile, by that novelty of which the common satiety of life sends us all in quest; the pleasures of sudden wonder are soon exhausted, and the mind can only repose on the stability of truth.

Shakspeare is above all writers, at least above all modern writers, the poet of nature; the poet that holds up to his readers a faithful mirror of manners and of life. His characters are not modified by the customs of particular places, unpractised by the rest of the world; by the peculiarities of studies or professions, which can operate but upon small numbers; or by the accidents of transient fashions or temporary opinions: they are the genuine progeny of common humanity, such as the world will always supply, and observation will always find. His persons act and speak by the influence of those general passions and principles by which all minds are agitated, and the whole system of life is continued in motion. In the writings of other poets a character is too often an

4 DR. JOHNSON'S PREFACE.

individual; in those of Shakspeare it is commonly a species.

It is from this wide extension of design that so much instruction is derived. It is this which fills the plays of Shakspeare with practical axioms and domestick wisdom. It was said of Euripides, that every verse was a precept; and it may be said of Shakspeare, that from his works may be collected a system of civil and æconomical prudence. Yet his real power is not shewn in the splendor of particular passages, but by the progress of his fable, and the tenor of his dialogue; and he that tries to recommend him by select quotations, will succeed like the pedant in Hierocles, who, when he offered his house to sale, carried a brick in his pocket as a specimen.

It will not easily be imagined how much Shakspeare excels in accommodating his sentiments to real life, but by comparing him with other authors. It was observed of the ancient schools of declamation, that the more diligently they were frequented, the more was the student disqualified for the world, because he found nothing there which he should ever meet in any other place. The same remark may be applied to every stage but that of Shakspeare. The theatre, when it is under any other direction, is peopled by such characters as were never seen, conversing in a language which was never heard, upon topics which will never arise in the commerce of mankind. But the dialogue of this author is often so evidently determined by the incident which produces it, and is pursued with so much ease and simplicity, that it seems scarcely to claim the merit of fiction, but to have been gleaned by diligent selection out of common conversation, and common occurrences.

Upon every other stage the universal agent is love, by whose power all good and evil is distributed, and every action quickened or retarded. To bring a lover, a lady, and a rival into the fable; to entangle them in contradictory obligations, perplex them with oppositions of interest, and harraiss them with violence of desires inconsistent with each other; to make them meet in rapture, and part in agony; to fill their mouths with hyperbolical
joy

joy and outrageous sorrow ; to distress them as nothing human ever was distressed ; to deliver them as nothing human ever was delivered, is the business of a modern dramatist. For this, probability is violated, life is misrepresented, and language is depraved. But love is only one of many passions, and as it has no great influence upon the sum of life, it has little operation in the dramas of a poet, who caught his ideas from the living world, and exhibited only what he saw before him. He knew, that any other passion, as it was regular or exorbitant, was a cause of happiness or calamity.

Characters thus ample and general were not easily discriminated and preserved, yet perhaps no poet ever kept his personages more distinct from each other. I will not say with Pope, that every speech may be assigned to the proper speaker, because many speeches there are which have nothing characteristical ; but, perhaps, though some may be equally adapted to every person, it will be difficult to find any that can be properly transferred from the present possessor to another claimant. The choice is right, when there is reason for choice.

Other dramatists can only gain attention by hyperbolical or aggravated characters, by fabulous and unexampled excellence or depravity, as the writers of barbarous romances invigorated the reader by a giant and a dwarf ; and he that should form his expectations of human affairs from the play, or from the tale, would be equally deceived. Shakspeare has no heroes ; his scenes are occupied only by men, who act and speak as the reader thinks that he should himself have spoken or acted on the same occasion : even where the agency is supernatural, the dialogue is level with life. Other writers disguise the most natural passions and most frequent incidents ; so that he who contemplates them in the book will not know them in the world : Shakspeare approximates the remote, and familiarizes the wonderful ; the event which he represents will not happen, but if it were possible, its effects would probably be such as he has assigned ; and it may be said, that he has not only shewn human nature as it acts in real exigences,

6 DR. JOHNSON'S PREFACE.

but as it would be found in trials, to which it cannot be exposed.

This therefore is the praise of Shakspeare, that his drama is the mirror of life; that he who has mazed his imagination, in following the phantoms which other writers raise up before him, may here be cured of his delirious ecstasies, by reading human sentiments in human language; by scenes from which a hermit may estimate the transactions of the world, and a confessor predict the progress of the passions.

His adherence to general nature has exposed him to the censure of criticks, who form their judgments upon narrower principles. Dennis and Rhymer think his Romans not sufficiently Roman; and Voltaire censures his kings as not completely royal. Dennis is offended, that Menenius, a senator of Rome, should play the buffoon; and Voltaire perhaps thinks decency violated when the Danish usurper is represented as a drunkard. But Shakspeare always makes nature predominate over accident; and if he preserves the essential character, is not very careful of distinctions superinduced and adventitious. His story requires Romans or kings, but he thinks only on men. He knew that Rome, like every other city, had men of all dispositions; and wanting a buffoon, he went into the senate-house for that which the senate-house would certainly have afforded him. He was inclined to shew an usurper and a murderer not only odious, but despicable; he therefore added drunkenness to his other qualities, knowing that kings love wine like other men, and that wine exerts its natural power upon kings. These are the petty cavils of petty minds; a poet overlooks the casual distinction of country and condition, as a painter, satisfied with the figure, neglects the drapery.

The censure which he has incurred by mixing comick, and tragick scenes, as it extends to all his works, deserves more consideration. Let the fact be first stated, and then examined.

Shakspeare's plays are not in the rigorous and critical sense either tragedies or comedies, but compositions of a distinct kind; exhibiting the real state of sublunary nature,

ture, which partakes of good and evil, joy and sorrow, mingled with endless variety of proportion and innumerable modes of combination; and expressing the course of the world, in which the loss of one is the gain of another; in which, at the same time, the reveller is hastening to his wine, and the mourner burying his friend; in which the malignity of one is sometimes defeated by the frolick of another; and many mischiefs and many benefits are done and hindered without design.

Out of this chaos of mingled purposes and casualties the ancient poets, according to the laws which custom had prescribed, selected some the crimes of men, and some their absurdities; some the momentous vicissitudes of life, and some the lighter occurrences; some the terrors of distress, and some the gayeties of prosperity. Thus rose the two modes of imitation, known by the names of *tragedy* and *comedy*, compositions intended to promote different ends by contrary means, and considered as so little allied, that I do not recollect among the Greeks or Romans a single writer who attempted both.

Shakspeare has united the powers of exciting laughter and sorrow not only in one mind, but in one composition. Almost all his plays are divided between serious and ludicrous characters, and, in the successive evolutions of the design, sometimes produce seriousness and sorrow, and sometimes levity and laughter.

That this is a practice contrary to the rules of criticism will be readily allowed; but there is always an appeal open from criticism to nature. The end of writing is to instruct; the end of poetry is to instruct by pleasing. That the mingled drama may convey all the instruction of tragedy or comedy cannot be denied, because it includes both in its alternations of exhibition, and approaches nearer than either to the appearance of life, by shewing how great machinations and slender designs may promote or obviate one another, and the high and the low co-operate in the general system by unavoidable concatenation.

It is objected, that by this change of scenes the passions are interrupted in their progression, and that the

principal event, being not advanced by a due gradation of preparatory incidents, wants at last the power to move, which constitutes the perfection of dramatick poetry. This reasoning is so specious, that it is received as true even by those who in daily experience feel it to be false. The interchanges of mingled scenes seldom fail to produce the intended vicissitudes of passion. Fiction cannot move so much, but that the attention may be easily transferred; and though it must be allowed that pleasing melancholy be sometimes interrupted by unwelcome levity, yet let it be considered likewise, that melancholy is often not pleasing, and that the disturbance of one man may be the relief of another; that different auditors have different habitudes; and that, upon the whole, all pleasure consists in variety.

The players, who in their edition divided our author's works into comedies, histories, and tragedies, seem not to have distinguished the three kinds, by any very exact or definite ideas.

An action which ended happily to the principal persons, however serious or distressful through its intermediate incidents, in their opinion constituted a comedy. This idea of a comedy continued long amongst us, and plays were written, which, by changing the catastrophe, were tragedies to-day, and comedies to-morrow.

Tragedy was not in those times a poem of more general dignity or elevation than comedy; it required only a calamitous conclusion, with which the common criticism of that age was satisfied, whatever lighter pleasure it afforded in its progress.

History was a series of actions, with no other than chronological succession, independent on each other, and without any tendency to introduce or regulate the conclusion. It is not always very nicely distinguished from tragedy. There is not much nearer approach to unity of action in the tragedy of *Antony and Cleopatra*, than in the history of *Richard the Second*. But a history might be continued through many plays; as it had no plan, it had no limits.

Through

Through all these denominations of the drama, Shakspeare's mode of composition is the same; an interchange of seriousness and merriment, by which the mind is softened at one time, and exhilarated at another. But whatever be his purpose, whether to gladden or depress, or to conduct the story, without vehemence or emotion, through tracts of easy and familiar dialogue, he never fails to attain his purpose; as he commands us, we laugh or mourn, or sit silent with quiet expectation, in tranquillity without indifference.

When Shakspeare's plan is understood, most of the criticisms of Rhymer and Voltaire vanish away. The play of *Hamlet* is opened, without impropriety, by two centinels; Iago bellows at Brabantio's window, without injury to the scheme of the play, though in terms which a modern audience would not easily endure; the character of Polonius is seasonable and useful; and the Grave-diggers themselves may be heard with applause.

Shakspeare engaged in dramatick poetry with the world open before him; the rules of the ancients were yet known to few; the publick judgment was unformed; he had no example of such fame as might force him upon imitation, nor criticks of such authority as might restrain his extravagance: he therefore indulged his natural disposition, and his disposition, as Rhymer has remarked, led him to comedy. In tragedy he often writes with great appearance of toil and study, what is written at last with little felicity; but in his comick scenes, he seems to produce without labour, what no labour can improve. In tragedy he is always struggling after some occasion to be comick, but in comedy he seems to repose, or to luxuriate, as in a mode of thinking congenial to his nature. In his tragick scenes there is always something wanting, but his comedy often surpasses expectation or desire. His comedy pleases by the thoughts and the language, and his tragedy for the greater part by incident and action. His tragedy seems to be skill, his comedy to be instinct.

The force of his comick scenes has suffered little diminution from the changes made by a century and a half,
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in manners or in words. As his personages act upon principles arising from genuine passion, very little modified by particular forms, their pleasures and vexations are communicable to all times and to all places; they are natural, and therefore durable; the adventitious peculiarities of personal habits, are only superficial dyes, bright and pleasing for a little while, yet soon fading to a dim tinct, without any remains of former lustre; but the discriminations of true passion are the colours of nature; they pervade the whole mass, and can only perish with the body that exhibits them. The accidental compositions of heterogeneous modes are dissolved by the chance which combined them; but the uniform simplicity of primitive qualities neither admits increase, nor suffers decay. The sand heaped by one flood is scattered by another, but the rock always continues in its place. The stream of time, which is continually washing the dissoluble fabricks of other poets, passes without injury by the adamant of Shakspeare.

If there be, what I believe there is, in every nation, a style which never becomes obsolete, a certain mode of phraseology so consonant and congenial to the analogy and principles of its respective language, as to remain settled and unaltered; this style is probably to be sought in the common intercourse of life, among those who speak only to be understood, without ambition of elegance. The polite are always catching modish innovations, and the learned depart from established forms of speech, in hope of finding or making better; those who wish for distinction forsake the vulgar, when the vulgar is right; but there is a conversation above grossness and below refinement, where propriety resides, and where this poet seems to have gathered his comick dialogue. He is therefore more agreeable to the ears of the present age than any other author equally remote, and among his other excellencies deserves to be studied as one of the original masters of our language.

These observations are to be considered not as unexceptionably constant, but as containing general and predominant truth. Shakspeare's familiar dialogue is affirmed

firmed to be smooth and clear, yet not wholly without ruggedness or difficulty; as a country may be eminently fruitful, though it has spots unfit for cultivation: his characters are praised as natural, though their sentiments are sometimes forced, and their actions improbable; as the earth upon the whole is spherical, though its surface is varied with protuberances and cavities.

Shakspeare with his excellencies has likewise faults, and faults sufficient to obscure and overwhelm any other merit. I shall shew them in the proportion in which they appear to me, without envious malignity or superstitious veneration. No question can be more innocently discussed than a dead poet's pretensions to renown; and little regard is due to that bigotry which sets candour higher than truth.

His first defect is that to which may be imputed most of the evil in books or in men. He sacrifices virtue to convenience, and is so much more careful to please than to instruct, that he seems to write without any moral purpose. From his writings indeed a system of social duty may be selected, for he that thinks reasonably must think morally; but his precepts and axioms drop casually from him; he makes no just distribution of good or evil, nor is always careful to shew in the virtuous a disapprobation of the wicked; he carries his persons indifferently through right and wrong, and at the close dismisses them without further care, and leaves their examples to operate by chance. This fault the barbarity of his age cannot extenuate; for it is always a writer's duty to make the world better, and justice is a virtue independent on time or place.

The plots are often so loosely formed, that a very slight consideration may improve them, and so carelessly pursued, that he seems not always fully to comprehend his own design. He omits opportunities of instructing or delighting, which the train of his story seems to force upon him, and apparently rejects those exhibitions which would be more affecting, for the sake of those which are more easy.

It may be observed, that in many of his plays the latter part is evidently neglected. When he found himself near the end of his work, and in view of his reward, he shortened the labour to snatch the profit. He therefore remits his efforts where he should most vigorously exert them, and his catastrophe is improbably produced or imperfectly represented.

He had no regard to distinction of time or place, but gives to one age or nation, without scruple, the customs, institutions, and opinions of another, at the expence not only of likelihood, but of possibility. These faults Pope has endeavoured, with more zeal than judgment, to transfer to his imagined interpolators. We need not wonder to find Hector quoting Aristotle, when we see the loves of Theseus and Hippolyta combined with the Gothick mythology of fairies. Shakspeare, indeed, was not the only violator of chronology, for in the same age Sidney, who wanted not the advantages of learning, has, in his *Arcadia*, confounded the pastoral with the feudal times, the days of innocence, quiet, and security, with those of turbulence, violence, and adventure.

In his comick scenes he is seldom very successful, when he engages his characters in reciprocations of smartness and contests of sarcasm; their jests are commonly gross, and their pleasantry licentious; neither his gentlemen nor his ladies have much delicacy, nor are sufficiently distinguished from his clowns by any appearance of refined manners. Whether he represented the real conversation of his time is not easy to determine; the reign of Elizabeth is commonly supposed to have been a time of stateliness, formality, and reserve, yet perhaps the relaxations of that severity were not very elegant. There must, however, have been always some modes of gaiety preferable to others, and a writer ought to chuse the best.

In tragedy his performance seems constantly to be worse, as his labour is more. The effusions of passion, which exigence forces out, are for the most part striking and energetick; but whenever he solicits his invention, or strains his faculties, the offspring of his throes

throes is tumour, meanness, tediousness, and obscurity.

In narration he affects a disproportionate pomp of diction, and a wearisome train of circumlocution, and tells the incident imperfectly in many words, which might have been more plainly delivered in few. Narration in dramatick poetry is naturally tedious, as it is unanimated and inactive, and obstructs the progress of the action; it should therefore always be rapid, and enlivened by frequent interruption. Shakspeare found it an encumbrance, and instead of lightening it by brevity, endeavoured to recommend it by dignity and splendor.

His declamations or set speeches are commonly cold and weak, for his power was the power of nature; when he endeavoured, like other tragick writers, to catch opportunities of amplification, and instead of inquiring what the occasion demanded, to shew how much his stores of knowledge could supply, he seldom escapes without the pity or resentment of his reader.

It is incident to him to be now and then entangled with an unwieldy sentiment, which he cannot well express, and will not reject; he struggles with it a while, and if it continues stubborn, comprises it in words such as occur, and leaves it to be disentangled and evolved by those who have more leisure to bestow upon it.

Not that always where the language is intricate the thought is subtle, or the image always great where the line is bulky; the equality of words to things is very often neglected, and trivial sentiments and vulgar ideas disappoint the attention, to which they are recommended by sonorous epithets and swelling figures.

But the admirers of this great poet have most reason to complain when he approaches nearest to his highest excellence, and seems fully resolved to sink them in dejection, and mollify them with tender emotions by the fall of greatness, the danger of innocence, or the crosses of love. What he does best, he soon ceases to do. He is not long soft and pathetick without some idle conceit, or contemptible equivocation. He no sooner begins to move, than he counteracts himself; and terror and pity,

as they are rising in the mind, are checked and blasted by sudden frigidity.

A quibble is to Shakspeare, what luminous vapours are to the traveller: he follows it at all adventures; it is sure to lead him out of his way, and sure to engulf him in the mire. It has some malignant power over his mind, and its fascinations are irresistible. Whatever be the dignity or profundity of his disquisition, whether he be enlarging knowledge or exalting affection, whether he be amusing attention with incidents, or enchainning it in suspense, let but a quibble spring up before him, and he leaves his work unfinished. A quibble is the golden apple for which he will always turn aside from his career, or stoop from his elevation. A quibble, poor and barren as it is, gave him such delight, that he was content to purchase it, by the sacrifice of reason, propriety, and truth. A quibble was to him the fatal Cleopatra for which he lost the world, and was content to lose it.

It will be thought strange, that, in enumerating the defects of this writer, I have not yet mentioned his neglect of the unities; his violation of those laws which have been instituted and established by the joint authority of poets and of criticks.

For his other deviations from the art of writing, I resign him to critical justice, without making any other demand in his favour, than that which must be indulged to all human excellence; that his virtues be rated with his failings: but, from the censure which this irregularity may bring upon him, I shall, with due reverence to that learning which I must oppose, adventure to try how I can defend him.

His histories, being neither tragedies nor comedies, are not subject to any of their laws; nothing more is necessary to all the praise which they expect, than that the changes of action be so prepared as to be understood, that the incidents be various and affecting, and the characters consistent, natural, and distinct. No other unity is intended, and therefore none is to be sought.

In his other works he has well enough preserved the unity of action. He has not, indeed, an intrigue regularly

larly perplexed and regularly unravelled; he does not endeavour to hide his design only to discover it, for this is seldom the order of real events, and Shakspeare is the poet of nature: but his plan has commonly what Aristotle requires, a beginning, a middle, and an end; one event is concatenated with another, and the conclusion follows by easy consequence. There are perhaps some incidents that might be spared, as in other poets there is much talk that only fills up time upon the stage; but the general system makes gradual advances, and the end of the play is the end of expectation.

To the unities of time and place he has shewn no regard; and perhaps a nearer view of the principles on which they stand will diminish their value, and withdraw from them the veneration which, from the time of Corneille, they have very generally received, by discovering that they have given more trouble to the poet, than pleasure to the auditor.

The necessity of observing the unities of time and place arises from the supposed necessity of making the drama credible. The criticks hold it impossible, that an action of months or years can be possibly believed to pass in three hours; or that the spectator can suppose himself to sit in the theatre, while ambassadors go and return between distant kings, while armies are levied and towns besieged, while an exile wanders and returns, or till he whom they saw courting his mistress, shall lament the untimely fall of his son. The mind revolts from evident falsehood, and fiction loses its force when it departs from the resemblance of reality.

From the narrow limitation of time necessarily arises the contraction of place. The spectator, who knows that he saw the first act at Alexandria, cannot suppose that he sees the next at Rome, at a distance to which not the dragons of Medea could, in so short a time, have transported him; he knows with certainty that he has not changed his place; and he knows that place cannot change itself; that what was a house cannot become a plain; that what was Thebes can never be Persepolis.

Such is the triumphant language with which a critick exults over the misery of an irregular poet, and exults commonly without resistance or reply. It is time therefore to tell him, by the authority of Shakspeare, that he assumes, as an unquestionable principle, a position, which, while his breath is forming it into words, his understanding pronounces to be false. It is false, that any representation is mistaken for reality; that any dramatick fable in its materiality was ever credible, or, for a single moment, was ever credited.

The objection arising from the impossibility of passing the first hour at Alexandria, and the next at Rome, supposes, that when the play opens the spectator really imagines himself at Alexandria, and believes that his walk to the theatre has been a voyage to Egypt, and that he lives in the days of Antony and Cleopatra. Surely he that imagines this may imagine more. He that can take the stage at one time for the palace of the Ptolemies, may take it in half an hour for the promontory of Actium. Delusion, if delusion be admitted, has no certain limitation; if the spectator can be once persuaded, that his old acquaintance are Alexander and Cæsar, that a room illuminated with candles is the plain of Pharsalia, or the bank of Granicus, he is in a state of elevation above the reach of reason, or of truth, and from the heights of empyrean poetry, may despise the circumscriptions of terrestrial nature. There is no reason why a mind thus wandering in ecstasy should count the clock, or why an hour should not be a century in that calenture of the brains that can make the stage a field.

The truth is, that the spectators are always in their senses, and know, from the first act to the last, that the stage is only a stage, and that the players are only players. They come to hear a certain number of lines recited with just gesture and elegant modulation. The lines relate to some action, and an action must be in some place; but the different actions that complete a story may be in places very remote from each other; and where is the absurdity of allowing that space to represent first Athens, and then Sicily, which was always
known

known to be neither Sicily nor Athens, but a modern theatre.

By supposition, as place is introduced, time may be extended; the time required by the fable elapses for the most part between the acts; for, of so much of the action as is represented, the real and poetical duration is the same. If, in the first act, preparations for war against Mithridates are represented to be made in Rome, the event of the war may, without absurdity, be represented, in the catastrophe, as happening in Pontus; we know that there is neither war, nor preparation for war; we know that we are neither in Rome nor Pontus; that neither Mithridates nor Lucullus are before us. The drama exhibits successive imitations of successive actions, and why may not the second imitation represent an action that happened years after the first; if it be so connected with it, that nothing but time can be supposed to intervene. Time is, of all modes of existence, most obsequious to the imagination; a lapse of years is as easily conceived as a passage of hours. In contemplation we easily contract the time of real actions, and therefore willingly permit it to be contracted when we only see their imitation.

It will be asked, how the drama moves, if it is not credited. It is credited with all the credit due to a drama. It is credited, whenever it moves, as a just picture of a real original; as representing to the auditor what he would himself feel, if he were to do or suffer what is there feigned to be suffered or to be done. The reflection that strikes the heart is not, that the evils before us are real evils, but that they are evils to which we ourselves may be exposed. If there be any fallacy, it is not that we fancy the players, but that we fancy ourselves unhappy for a moment; but we rather lament the possibility than suppose the presence of misery, as a mother weeps over her babe, when she remembers that death may take it from her. The delight of tragedy proceeds from our consciousness of fiction; if we thought murders and treasons real, they would please no more.

Imitations produce pain or pleasure, not because they are mistaken for realities, but because they bring realities to mind. When the imagination is recreated by a painted landscape, the trees are not supposed capable to give us shade, or the fountains coolness; but we consider, how we should be pleased with such fountains playing beside us, and such woods waving over us. We are agitated in reading the history of *Henry the Fifth*, yet no man takes his book for the field of Agincourt. A dramatick exhibition is a book recited with concomitants that increase or diminish its effect. Familiar comedy is often more powerful on the theatre, than in the page; imperial tragedy is always less. The humour of *Petruchio* may be heightened by grimace; but what voice or what gesture can hope to add dignity or force to the soliloquy of *Cato*?

A play read, affects the mind like a play acted. It is therefore evident, that the action is not supposed to be real; and it follows, that between the acts a longer or shorter time may be allowed to pass, and that no more account of space or duration is to be taken by the auditor of a drama, than by the reader of a narrative, before whom may pass in an hour the life of a hero, or the revolutions of an empire.

Whether Shakspeare knew the unities, and rejected them by design, or deviated from them by happy ignorance, it is, I think, impossible to decide, and useless to enquire. We may reasonably suppose, that, when he rose to notice, he did not want the counsels and admonitions of scholars and criticks, and that he at last deliberately persisted in a practice, which he might have begun by chance. As nothing is essential to the fable, but unity of action, and as the unities of time and place arise evidently from false assumptions, and, by circumscribing the extent of the drama, lessen its variety, I cannot think it much to be lamented, that they were not known by him, or not observed: nor, if such another poet could arise, should I very vehemently reproach him, that his first act passed at Venice, and his next in Cyprus. Such violations of rules merely positive, become the
comprehensive

comprehensive genius of Shakspeare, and such censures are suitable to the minute and slender criticism of Voltaire :

*Non usque adeo permiscuit imis
Longus summa dies, ut non, si voce Metelli
Serventur leges, malint a Cæsare tolli.*

Yet when I speak thus slightly of dramatick rules, I cannot but recollect how much wit and learning may be produced against me ; before such authorities I am afraid to stand, not that I think the present question one of those that are to be decided by mere authority, but because it is to be suspected, that these precepts have not been so easily received, but for better reasons than I have yet been able to find. The result of my enquiries, in which it would be ludicrous to boast of impartiality, is, that the unities of time and place are not essential to a just drama, that though they may sometimes conduce to pleasure, they are always to be sacrificed to the nobler beauties of variety and instruction ; and that a play, written with nice observation of critical rules, is to be contemplated as an elaborate curiosity, as the product of superfluous and ostentatious art, by which is shewn, rather what is possible, than what is necessary.

He that, without diminution of any other excellence, shall preserve all the unities unbroken, deserves the like applause with the architect, who shall display all the orders of architecture in a citadel, without any deduction from its strength ; but the principal beauty of a citadel is to exclude the enemy ; and the greatest graces of a play are to copy nature, and instruct life.

Perhaps, what I have here not dogmatically but deliberately written, may recal the principles of the drama to a new examination. I am almost frightened at my own temerity ; and when I estimate the fame and the strength of those that maintain the contrary opinion, am ready to sink down in reverential silence ; as Æneas withdrew from the defence of Troy, when he saw Neptune shaking the wall, and Juno heading the besiegers.

Those whom my arguments cannot persuade to give their approbation to the judgment of Shakspeare, will

easily, if they consider the condition of his life, make some allowance for his ignorance.

Every man's performances, to be rightly estimated, must be compared with the state of the age in which he lived, and with his own particular opportunities; and though to a reader a book be not worse or better for the circumstances of the author, yet as there is always a silent reference of human works to human abilities, and as the enquiry, how far man may extend his designs, or how high he may rate his native force, is of far greater dignity than in what rank we shall place any particular performance, curiosity is always busy to discover the instruments, as well as to survey the workmanship, to know how much is to be ascribed to original powers, and how much to casual and adventitious help. 'The palaces of Peru or Mexico were certainly mean and incommodious habitations, if compared to the houses of European monarchs; yet who could forbear to view them with astonishment, who remembered that they were built without the use of iron?

The English nation, in the time of Shakspeare, was yet struggling to emerge from barbarity. The philology of Italy had been transplanted hither in the reign of Henry the Eighth; and the learned languages had been successfully cultivated by Lilly, Linacre, and More; by Pole, Cheke, and Gardiner; and afterwards by Smith, Clerk, Haddon, and Ascham. Greek was now taught to boys in the principal schools; and those who united elegance with learning, read, with great diligence, the Italian and Spanish poets. But literature was yet confined to professed scholars, or to men and women of high rank. The publick was gross and dark; and to be able to read and write, was an accomplishment still valued for its rarity.

Nations, like individuals, have their infancy. A people newly awakened to literary curiosity, being yet unacquainted with the true state of things, knows not how to judge of that which is proposed as its resemblance. Whatever is remote from common appearances is always welcome to vulgar, as to childish credulity; and

and of a country unenlightened by learning, the whole people is the vulgar. The study of those who then aspired to plebeian learning was laid out upon adventures, giants, dragons, and enchantments. *The Death of Arthur* was the favourite volume.

The mind, which has feasted on the luxurious wonders of fiction, has no taste of the insipidity of truth. A play, which imitated only the common occurrences of the world, would, upon the admirers of *Palmerin* and *Guy of Warwick*, have made little impression; he that wrote for such an audience was under the necessity of looking round for strange events and fabulous transactions, and that incredibility, by which maturer knowledge is offended, was the chief recommendation of writings, to unskilful curiosity.

Our author's plots are generally borrowed from novels; and it is reasonable to suppose, that he chose the most popular, such as were read by many, and related by more; for his audience could not have followed him through the intricacies of the drama, had they not held the thread of the story in their hands.

The stories, which we now find only in remoter authors, were in his time accessible and familiar. The fable of *As you like it*, which is supposed to be copied from *Chaucer's Gamelyn*, was a little pamphlet of those times; and old Mr. Cibber remembered the tale of *Hamlet* in plain English prose, which the criticks have now to seek in *Saxo Grammaticus*.

His English histories he took from English chronicles and English ballads; and as the ancient writers were made known to his countrymen by versions, they supplied him with new subjects; he dilated some of Plutarch's lives into plays, when they had been translated by North.

His plots, whether historical or fabulous, are always crowded with incidents, by which the attention of a rude people was more easily caught than by sentiment or argumentation; and such is the power of the marvellous, even over those who despise it, that every man finds his mind more strongly seized by the tragedies of Shakspeare

than of any other writer; others please us by particular speeches, but he always makes us anxious for the event, and has perhaps excelled all but Homer in securing the first purpose of a writer, by exciting restless and unquenchable curiosity, and compelling him that reads his work to read it through.

The shows and bustle with which his plays abound have the same original. As knowledge advances, pleasure passes from the eye to the ear, but returns, as it declines, from the ear to the eye. Those to whom our author's labours were exhibited had more skill in pomps or processions than in poetical language, and perhaps wanted some visible and discriminated events, as comments on the dialogue. He knew how he should most please; and whether his practice is more agreeable to nature, or whether his example has prejudiced the nation, we still find that on our stage something must be done as well as said, and inactive declamation is very coldly heard, however musical or elegant, passionate or sublime.

Voltaire expresses his wonder, that our author's extravagancies are endured by a nation, which has seen the tragedy of *Cato*. Let him be answered, that Addison speaks the language of poets, and Shakspeare, of men. We find in *Cato* innumerable beauties which enamour us of its author, but we see nothing that acquaints us with human sentiments or human actions; we place it with the fairest and the noblest progeny which judgment propagates by conjunction with learning; but *Othello* is the vigorous and vivacious offspring of observation impregnated by genius. *Cato* affords a splendid exhibition of artificial and fictitious manners, and delivers just and noble sentiments, in diction easy, elevated, and harmonious, but its hopes and fears communicate no vibration to the heart; the composition refers us only to the writer; we pronounce the name of *Cato*, but we think on *Addison*.

The work of a correct and regular writer is a garden accurately formed and diligently planted, varied with shades, and scented with flowers; the composition of Shakspeare is a forest, in which oaks extend their

branches,

branches, and pines tower in the air, interspersed sometimes with weeds and brambles, and sometimes giving shelter to myrtles and to roses; filling the eye with awful pomp, and gratifying the mind with endless diversity. Other poets display cabinets of precious rarities, minutely finished, wrought into shape, and polished into brightness. Shakspeare opens a mine which contains gold and diamonds in unexhaustible plenty, though clouded by incrustations, debased by impurities, and mingled with a mass of meaner minerals.

It has been much disputed, whether Shakspeare owed his excellence to his own native force, or whether he had the common helps of scholastick education, the precepts of critical science, and the examples of ancient authors.

There has always prevailed a tradition, that Shakspeare wanted learning, that he had no regular education, nor much skill in the dead languages. Jonson, his friend, affirms, that *he had small Latin, and less Greek*; who, besides that he had no imaginable temptation to falsehood, wrote at a time when the character and acquisitions of Shakspeare were known to multitudes. His evidence ought therefore to decide the controversy, unless some testimony of equal force could be opposed.

Some have imagined, that they have discovered deep learning in many imitations of old writers; but the examples which I have known urged, were drawn from books translated in his time; or were such easy coincidences of thought, as will happen to all who consider the same subjects; or such remarks on life or axioms of morality as float in conversation, and are transmitted through the world in proverbial sentences.

I have found it remarked, that, in this important sentence, *Go, before, I'll follow*, we read a translation of, *I prae, sequar*. I have been told, that when Caliban, after a pleasing dream, says, *I cry'd to sleep again*, the author imitates Anacreon, who had, like every other man, the same wish on the same occasion.

There are a few passages which may pass for imitations, but so few, that the exception only confirms the

rule; he obtained them from accidental quotations, or by oral communication, and as he used what he had, would have used more if he had obtained it.

The *Comedy of Errors* is confessedly taken from the *Menæchmi* of *Plautus*; from the only play of *Plautus* which was then in English. What can be more probable, than that he who copied that, would have copied more; but that those which were not translated were inaccessible?

Whether he knew the modern languages is uncertain. That his plays have some French scenes proves but little; he might easily procure them to be written, and probably, even though he had known the language in the common degree, he could not have written it without assistance. In the story of *Romeo* and *Juliet* he is observed to have followed the English translation, where it deviates from the Italian; but this on the other part proves nothing against his knowledge of the original. He was to copy, not what he knew himself, but what was known to his audience.

It is most likely that he had learned Latin sufficiently to make him acquainted with construction, but that he never advanced to an easy perusal of the Roman authors. Concerning his skill in modern languages, I can find no sufficient ground of determination; but as no imitations of French or Italian authors have been discovered, though the Italian poetry was then high in esteem, I am inclined to believe, that he read little more than English, and chose for his fables only such tales as he found translated.

That much knowledge is scattered over his works is very justly observed by *Pope*, but it is often such knowledge as books did not supply. He that will understand *Shakspeare*, must not be content to study him in the closet, he must look for his meaning sometimes among the sports of the field, and sometimes among the manufactures of the shop.

There is however proof enough that he was a very diligent reader, nor was our language then so indigent of books, but that he might very liberally indulge his curiosity

riosity without excursion into foreign literature. Many of the Roman authors were translated, and some of the Greek; the Reformation had filled the kingdom with theological learning; most of the topicks of human disquisition had found English writers; and poetry had been cultivated, not only with diligence, but success. This was a stock of knowledge sufficient for a mind so capable of appropriating and improving it.

But the greater part of his excellence was the product of his own genius. He found the English stage in a state of the utmost rudeness; no essays either in tragedy or comedy had appeared, from which it could be discovered to what degree of delight either one or other might be carried. Neither character nor dialogue were yet understood. Shakspeare may be truly said to have introduced them both amongst us, and in some of his happier scenes to have carried them both to the utmost height.

By what gradations of improvement he proceeded, is not easily known; for the chronology of his works is yet unsettled. Rowe is of opinion, that *perhaps we are not to look for his beginning, like those of other writers, in his least perfect works; art had so little, and nature so large a share in what he did, that for ought I know, says he, the performances of his youth, as they were the most vigorous, were the best.* But the power of nature is only the power of using to any certain purpose the materials which diligence procures, or opportunity supplies. Nature gives no man knowledge, and when images are collected by study and experience, can only assist in combining or applying them. Shakspeare, however favoured by nature, could impart only what he had learned; and as he must increase his ideas, like other mortals, by gradual acquisition, he, like them, grew wiser as he grew older, could display life better, as he knew it more, and instruct with more efficacy, as he was himself more amply instructed.

There is a vigilance of observation and accuracy of distinction which books and precepts cannot confer; from this almost all original and native excellence proceeds. Shakspeare must have looked upon mankind with
per-

perspicacity, in the highest degree curious and attentive. Other writers borrow their characters from preceding writers, and diversify them only by the accidental appendages of present manners; the dress is a little varied, but the body is the same. Our author had both matter and form to provide; for, except the characters of Chaucer, to whom I think he is not much indebted, there were no writers in English, and perhaps not many in other modern languages, which shewed life in its native colours.

The contest about the original benevolence or malignity of man had not yet commenced. Speculation had not yet attempted to analyse the mind, to trace the passions to their sources, to unfold the seminal principles of vice and virtue, or sound the depths of the heart for the motives of action. All those enquiries, which from that time that human nature became the fashionable study, have been made sometimes with nice discernment, but often with idle subtilty, were yet unattempted. The tales, with which the infancy of learning was satisfied, exhibited only the superficial appearances of action, related the events, but omitted the causes, and were formed for such as delighted in wonders rather than in truth. Mankind was not then to be studied in the closet; he that would know the world, was under the necessity of gleanng his own remarks, by mingling as he could in its business and amusements.

Boyle congratulated himself upon his high birth, because it favoured his curiosity, by facilitating his access. Shakspeare had no such advantage; he came to London a needy adventurer, and lived for a time by very mean employments. Many works of genius and learning have been performed in states of life that appear very little favourable to thought or to enquiry; so many, that he who considers them is inclined to think that he sees enterprize and perseverance predominating over all external agency, and bidding help and hindrance vanish before them. The genius of Shakspeare was not to be depressed by the weight of poverty, nor limited by the narrow conversation to which men in want are inevitably condemned;

condemned; the incumbrances of his fortune were shaken from his mind, *as dew-drops from a lion's mane*.

Though he had so many difficulties to encounter, and so little assistance to surmount them, he has been able to obtain an exact knowledge of many modes of life, and many casts of native dispositions; to vary them with great multiplicity; to mark them by nice distinctions; and to shew them in full view by proper combinations. In this part of his performances he had none to imitate, but has been himself imitated by all succeeding writers; and it may be doubted, whether from all his successors more maxims of theoretical knowledge, or more rules of practical prudence, can be collected, than he alone has given to his country.

Nor was his attention confined to the actions of men; he was an exact surveyor of the inanimate world; his descriptions have always some peculiarities, gathered by contemplating things as they really exist. It may be observed, that the oldest poets of many nations preserve their reputation, and that the following generations of wit, after a short celebrity, sink into oblivion. The first, whoever they be, must take their sentiments and descriptions immediately from knowledge; the resemblance is therefore just, their descriptions are verified by every eye, and their sentiments acknowledged by every breast. Those whom their fame invites to the same studies, copy partly them, and partly nature, till the books of one age gain such authority, as to stand in the place of nature to another, and imitation, always deviating a little, becomes at last capricious and casual. Shakspeare, whether life or nature be his subject, shews plainly, that he has seen with his own eyes; he gives the image which he receives, not weakened or distorted by the intervention of any other mind; the ignorant feel his representations to be just, and the learned see that they are complete.

Perhaps it would not be easy to find any author, except Homer, who invented so much as Shakspeare, who so much advanced the studies which he cultivated, or effused so much novelty upon his age or country. The
form,

form, the characters, the language, and the shows of the English drama are his. *He seems, says Dennis, to have been the very original of our English tragical harmony, that is, the harmony of blank verse, diversified often by dissyllable and trissyllable terminations. For the diversity distinguishes it from heroick harmony, and by bringing it nearer to common use makes it more proper to gain attention, and more fit for action and dialogue. Such verse we make when we are writing prose; we make such verse in common conversation.*

I know not whether this praise is rigorously just. The dissyllable termination, which the critick rightly appropriates to the drama, is to be found, though, I think, not in *Gorboduc*, which is confessedly before our author; yet in *Hieronimo* *, of which the date is not certain, but which there is reason to believe at least as old as his earliest plays. This however is certain, that he is the first who taught either tragedy or comedy to please, there being no theatrical piece of any older writer, of which the name is known, except to antiquaries and collectors of books, which are sought because they are scarce, and would not have been scarce, had they been much esteemed.

To him we must ascribe the praise, unless Spenser may divide it with him, of having first discovered to how much smoothness and harmony the English language could be softened. He has speeches, perhaps sometimes scenes, which have all the delicacy of Rowe, without his effeminacy. He endeavours indeed commonly to strike by the force and vigour of his dialogue, but he never executes his purpose better, than when he tries to sooth by softness.

Yet it must be at last confessed, that as we owe every thing to him, he owes something to us; that, if much of his praise is paid by perception and judgment, much is likewise given by custom and veneration. We fix our eyes upon his graces, and turn them from his deformi-

* It appears from the induction of Ben Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair* to have been acted before the year 1590. STEEVENS.

ties, and endure in him what we should in another loath or despise. If we endured without praising, respect for the father of our drama might excuse us; but I have seen, in the book of some modern critick, a collection of anomalies, which shew that he has corrupted language by every mode of depravation, but which his admirer has accumulated as a monument of honour.

He has scenes of undoubted and perpetual excellence, but perhaps not one play, which, if it were now exhibited as the work of a contemporary writer, would be heard to the conclusion. I am indeed far from thinking, that his works were wrought to his own ideas of perfection; when they were such as would satisfy the audience, they satisfied the writer. It is seldom that authors, though more studious of fame than Shakspeare, rise much above the standard of their own age; to add a little to what is best will always be sufficient for present praise, and those who find themselves exalted into fame, are willing to credit their encomiasts, and to spare the labour of contending with themselves.

It does not appear, that Shakspeare thought his works worthy of posterity, that he levied any ideal tribute upon future times, or had any further prospect, than of present popularity and present profit. When his plays had been acted, his hope was at an end; he solicited no addition of honour from the reader. He therefore made no scruple to repeat the same jests in many dialogues, or to entangle different plots by the same knot of perplexity, which may be at least forgiven him, by those who recollect, that of Congreve's four comedies, two are concluded by a marriage in a mask, by a deception, which perhaps never happened, and which, whether likely or not, he did not invent.

So careless was this great poet of future fame, that, though he retired to ease and plenty, while he was yet little *declined into the vale of years*, before he could be disgusted with fatigue, or disabled by infirmity, he made no collection of his works, nor desired to rescue those that had been already published from the depravations that obscured them, or secure to the rest a better
destiny,

destiny, by giving them to the world in their genuine state.

Of the plays which bear the name of Shakspeare in the late editions, the greater part were not published till about seven years after his death, and the few which appeared in his life are apparently thrust into the world without the care of the author, and therefore probably without his knowledge.

Of all the publishers, clandestine or professed, the negligence and unskilfulness has by the late revisers been sufficiently shewn. The faults of all are indeed numerous and gross, and have not only corrupted many passages perhaps beyond recovery, but have brought others into suspicion, which are only obscured by obsolete phraseology, or by the writer's unskilfulness and affectation. To alter is more easy than to explain, and temerity is a more common quality than diligence. Those who saw that they must employ conjecture to a certain degree, were willing to indulge it a little further. Had the author published his own works, we should have sat quietly down to disentangle his intricacies, and clear his obscurities; but now we tear what we cannot loose, and eject what we happen not to understand.

The faults are more than could have happened without the concurrence of many causes. The style of Shakspeare was in itself ungrammatical, perplexed, and obscure; his works were transcribed for the players by those who may be supposed to have seldom understood them; they were transmitted by copiers equally unskilful, who still multiplied errors; they were perhaps sometimes mutilated by the actors, for the sake of shortening the speeches; and were at last printed without correction of the press.

In this state they remained, not as Dr. Warburton supposes, because they were unregarded, but because the editor's art was not yet applied to modern languages, and our ancestors were accustomed to so much negligence of English printers, that they could very patiently endure it. At last an edition was undertaken by Rowe;
not

not because a poet was to be published by a poet, for Rowe seems to have thought very little on correction or explanation, but that our author's works might appear like those of his fraternity, with the appendages of a life and commendatory preface. Rowe has been clamorously blamed for not performing what he did not undertake, and it is time that justice be done him, by confessing, that though he seems to have had no thought of corruption beyond the printer's errors, yet he has made many emendations, if they were not made before, which his successors have received without acknowledgment, and which, if they had produced them, would have filled pages and pages with censures of the stupidity by which the faults were committed, with displays of the absurdities which they involved, with ostentatious expositions of the new reading, and self-congratulations on the happiness of discovering it.

As of the other editors, I have preserved the prefaces, I have likewise borrowed the author's life from Rowe, though not written with much elegance or spirit; it relates however what is now to be known, and therefore deserves to pass through all succeeding publications.

The nation had been for many years content enough with Mr. Rowe's performance, when Mr. Pope made them acquainted with the true state of Shakspeare's text, shewed that it was extremely corrupt, and gave reason to hope that there were means of reforming it. He collated the old copies, which none had thought to examine before, and restored many lines to their integrity; but, by a very compendious criticism, he rejected whatever he disliked, and thought more of amputation than of cure.

I know not why he is commended by Dr. Warburton for distinguishing the genuine from the spurious plays. In this choice he exerted no judgment of his own; the plays which he received, were given by Hemings and Condell, the first editors; and those which he rejected, though, according to the licentiousness of the press in those times, they were printed during Shakspeare's life,
with

with his name, had been omitted by his friends, and were never added to his works before the edition of 1664, from which they were copied by the later printers.

This is a work which Pope seems to have thought unworthy of his abilities, being not able to suppress his contempt of *the dull duty of an editor*. He understood but half his undertaking. The duty of a collator is indeed dull, yet, like other tedious tasks, is very necessary; but an emendatory critick would ill discharge his duty, without qualities very different from dulness. In perusing a corrupted piece, he must have before him all possibilities of meaning, with all possibilities of expression. Such must be his comprehension of thought, and such his copiousness of language. Out of many readings possible, he must be able to select that which best suits with the state, opinions, and modes of language prevailing in every age, and with his author's particular cast of thought, and turn of expression. Such must be his knowledge, and such his taste. Conjectural criticism demands more than humanity possesses, and he that exercises it with most praise, has very frequent need of indulgence. Let us now be told no more of the dull duty of an editor.

Confidence is the common consequence of success. They whose excellence of any kind has been loudly celebrated, are ready to conclude, that their powers are universal. Pope's edition fell below his own expectations, and he was so much offended, when he was found to have left any thing for others to do, that he passed the latter part of his life in a state of hostility with verbal criticism.

I have retained all his notes, that no fragment of so great a writer may be lost; his preface, valuable alike for elegance of composition and justness of remark, and containing a general criticism on his author, so extensive that little can be added, and so exact, that little can be disputed, every editor has an interest to suppress, but that every reader would demand its insertion.

Pope was succeeded by Theobald, a man of narrow comprehension, and small acquisitions, with no native and intrinsic splendor of genius, with little of the artificial light of learning, but zealous for minute accuracy, and not negligent in pursuing it. He collated the ancient copies, and rectified many errors. A man so anxiously scrupulous might have been expected to do more, but what little he did was commonly right.

In his reports of copies and editions he is not to be trusted without examination. He speaks sometimes indefinitely of copies, when he has only one. In his enumeration of editions, he mentions the two first folios as of high, and the third folio as of middle authority; but the truth is, that the first is equivalent to all others, and that the rest only deviate from it by the printer's negligence. Whoever has any of the folios has all, excepting those diversities which mere reiteration of editions will produce. I collated them all at the beginning, but afterwards used only the first.

Of his notes I have generally retained those which he retained himself in his second edition, except when they were confuted by subsequent annotators, or were too minute to merit preservation. I have sometimes adopted his restoration of a comma, without inserting the panegyrick in which he celebrated himself for his achievement. The exuberant excrescence of his diction I have often lopped, his triumphant exultations over Pope and Rowe I have sometimes suppressed, and his contemptible ostentation I have frequently concealed; but I have in some places shewn him, as he would have shewn himself, for the reader's diversion, that the inflated emptiness of some notes may justify or excuse the contraction of the rest.

Theobald, thus weak and ignorant, thus mean and faithless, thus petulant and ostentatious, by the good luck of having Pope for his enemy, has escaped, and escaped alone, with reputation, from this undertaking. So willingly does the world support those who solicit favour, against those who command reverence; and so easily is he praised, whom no man can envy.

Our author fell then into the hands of Sir Thomas Hanmer, the Oxford editor, a man, in my opinion, eminently qualified by nature for such studies. He had, what is the first requisite to emendatory criticism, that intuition by which the poet's intention is immediately discovered, and that dexterity of intellect which dispatches its work by the easiest means. He had undoubtedly read much; his acquaintance with customs, opinions, and traditions, seems to have been large; and he is often learned without shew. He seldom passes what he does not understand, without an attempt to find or to make a meaning, and sometimes hastily makes what a little more attention would have found. He is solicitous to reduce to grammar, what he could not be sure that his author intended to be grammatical. Shakspeare regarded more the series of ideas, than of words; and his language, not being designed for the reader's desk, was all that he desired it to be, if it conveyed his meaning to the audience.

Hanmer's care of the metre has been too violently censured. He found the measure reformed in so many passages, by the silent labours of some editors, with the silent acquiescence of the rest, that he thought himself allowed to extend a little further the licence, which had already been carried so far without reprehension; and of his corrections in general, it must be confessed, that they are often just, and made commonly with the least possible violation of the text.

But, by inserting his emendations, whether invented or borrowed, into the page, without any notice of varying copies, he has appropriated the labour of his predecessors, and made his own edition of little authority. His confidence indeed, both in himself and others, was too great; he supposes all to be right that was done by Pope and Theobald; he seems not to suspect a critick of fallibility, and it was but reasonable that he should claim what he so liberally granted.

As he never writes without careful enquiry and diligent consideration, I have received all his notes, and believe that every reader will wish for more.

Of the last editor it is more difficult to speak. Respect is due to high place, tenderness to living reputation, and veneration to genius and learning; but he cannot be justly offended at that liberty of which he has himself so frequently given an example, nor very solicitous what is thought of notes, which he ought never to have considered as part of his serious employments, and which, I suppose, since the ardor of composition is remitted, he no longer numbers among his happy effusions.

The original and predominant error of his commentary, is acquiescence in his first thoughts; that precipitation which is produced by consciousness of quick discernment; and that confidence which presumes to do, by surveying the surface, what labour only can perform, by penetrating the bottom. His notes exhibit sometimes perverse interpretations, and sometimes improbable conjectures; he at one time gives the author more profundity of meaning than the sentence admits, and at another discovers absurdities, where the sense is plain to every other reader. But his emendations are likewise often happy and just; and his interpretation of obscure passages learned and sagacious.

Of his notes, I have commonly rejected those, against which the general voice of the publick has exclaimed, or which their own incongruity immediately condemns, and which, I suppose the author himself would desire to be forgotten. Of the rest, to part I have given the highest approbation, by inserting the offered reading in the text; part I have left to the judgment of the reader, as doubtful, though specious; and part I have censured without reserve, but I am sure without bitterness of malice, and, I hope, without wantonness of insult.

It is no pleasure to me, in revising my volumes, to observe how much paper is wasted in confutation. Whoever considers the revolutions of learning, and the various questions of greater or less importance, upon which wit and reason have exercised their powers, must lament the unsuccessfulness of enquiry, and the slow advances of truth, when he reflects, that great part of the labour of every writer is only the destruction of those that went

before him. The first care of the builder of a new system, is to demolish the fabricks which are standing. The chief desire of him that comments an author, is to shew how much other commentators have corrupted and obscured him. The opinions prevalent in one age, as truths above the reach of controversy, are confuted and rejected in another, and rise again to reception in remoter times. Thus the human mind is kept in motion without progress. Thus sometimes truth and error, and sometimes contrarieties of error, take each other's place by reciprocal invasion. The tide of seeming knowledge which is poured over one generation, retires and leaves another naked and barren; the sudden meteors of intelligence, which for a while appear to shoot their beams into the regions of obscurity, on a sudden withdraw their lustre, and leave mortals again to grope their way.

These elevations and depressions of renown, and the contradictions to which all improvers of knowledge must for ever be exposed, since they are not escaped by the highest and brightest of mankind, may surely be endured with patience by criticks and annotators, who can rank themselves but as the satellites of their authors. How canst thou beg for life, says Homer's hero to his captive, when thou knowest that thou art now to suffer only what must another day be suffered by Achilles?

Dr. Warburton had a name sufficient to confer celebrity on those who could exalt themselves into antagonists, and his notes have raised a clamour too loud to be distinct. His chief assailants are the authors of *The canons of criticism*, and of *The revisal of Shakspeare's text*; of whom one ridicules his errors with airy petulance, suitable enough to the levity of the controversy; the other attacks them with gloomy malignity, as if he were dragging to justice an assassin or incendiary. The one stings like a fly, sucks a little blood, takes a gay flutter, and returns for more; the other bites like a viper, and would be glad to leave inflammations and gangrene behind him. When I think on one, with his confederates, I remember the danger of Coriolanus, who was afraid that *girls*
with

spits, and boys with stones, should slay him in puny battle; when the other crosses my imagination, I remember the prodigy in Macbeth:

*A falcon tow'ring in his pride of place,
Was by a mousing owl hawk'd at and kill'd.*

Let me however do them justice. One is a wit, and one a scholar*. They have both shewn acuteness sufficient in the discovery of faults, and have both advanced some probable interpretations of obscure passages; but when they aspire to conjecture and emendation, it appears how falsely we all estimate our own abilities, and the little which they have been able to perform might have taught them more candour to the endeavours of others.

Before Dr. Warburton's edition, *Critical observations on Shakspeare* had been published by Mr. Upton†, a man skilled in languages, and acquainted with books, but who seems to have had no great vigour of genius or nicety of taste. Many of his explanations are curious and useful, but he likewise, though he professed to oppose the licentious confidence of editors, and adhere to the old copies, is unable to restrain the rage of emendation, though his ardour is ill seconded by his skill. Every cold empirick, when his heart is expanded by a successful experiment, swells into a theorist, and the laborious collator at some unlucky moment frolicks in conjecture.

Critical, historical, and explanatory notes have been likewise published upon Shakspeare by Dr. Grey, whose diligent perusal of the old English writers has enabled him to make some useful observations. What he under-

* It is extraordinary that this gentleman should attempt so voluminous a work, as the *Revisal of Shakspeare's text*, when he tells us in his preface, "he was not so fortunate as to be furnished with either
" of the folio editions, much less any of the ancient quartos: and
" even Sir Thomas Hanmer's performance was known to him only by
" Dr. Warburton's representation." FARMER.

† Republished by him in 1748, after Dr. Warburton's edition, with alterations, &c. STEEVENS.

38 DR. JOHNSON'S PREFACE.

took he has well enough performed, but as he neither attempts judicial nor emendatory criticism, he employs rather his memory than his sagacity. It were to be wished that all would endeavour to imitate his modesty, who have not been able to surpass his knowledge.

I can say with great sincerity of all my predecessors, what I hope will hereafter be said of me, that not one has left Shakspeare without improvement, nor is there one to whom I have not been indebted for assistance and information. Whatever I have taken from them, it was my intention to refer to its original author, and it is certain, that what I have not given to another, I believed when I wrote it to be my own. In some perhaps I have been anticipated; but if I am ever found to encroach upon the remarks of any other commentator, I am willing that the honour, be it more or less, should be transferred to the first claimant, for his right, and his alone, stands above dispute; the second can prove his pretensions only to himself, nor can himself always distinguish invention, with sufficient certainty, from recollection.

They have all been treated by me with candour, which they have not been careful of observing to one another. It is not easy to discover from what cause the acrimony of a scholiast can naturally proceed. The subjects to be discussed by him are of very small importance; they involve neither property nor liberty; nor favour the interest of sect or party. The various readings of copies, and different interpretations of a passage, seem to be questions that might exercise the wit, without engaging the passions. But whether it be, that *small things make mean men proud*, and vanity catches small occasions; or that all contrariety of opinion, even in those that can defend it no longer, makes proud men angry; there is often found in commentaries a spontaneous strain of invective and contempt, more eager and venomous than is vented by the most furious controvertist in politics against those whom he is hired to defame.

Perhaps the lightness of the matter may conduce to the vehemence of the agency; when the truth to be investigated

gated is so near to inexistence, as to escape attention, its bulk is to be enlarged by rage and exclamation: that to which all would be indifferent in its original state, may attract notice when the fate of a name is appended to it. A commentator has indeed great temptations to supply by turbulence what he wants of dignity, to beat his little gold to a spacious surface, to work that to foam which no art or diligence can exalt to spirit.

The notes which I have borrowed or written are either illustrative, by which difficulties are explained; or judicial, by which faults and beauties are remarked; or emendatory, by which depravations are corrected.

The explanations transcribed from others, if I do not subjoin any other interpretation, I suppose commonly to be right, at least I intend by acquiescence to confess, that I have nothing better to propose.

After the labours of all the editors, I found many passages which appeared to me likely to obstruct the greater number of readers, and thought it my duty to facilitate their passage. It is impossible for an expositor not to write too little for some, and too much for others. He can only judge what is necessary by his own experience; and how long soever he may deliberate, will at last explain many lines which the learned will think impossible to be mistaken, and omit many for which the ignorant will want his help. These are censures merely relative, and must be quietly endured. I have endeavoured to be neither superfluously copious, nor scrupulously reserved, and hope that I have made my author's meaning accessible to many, who before were frightened from perusing him, and contributed something to the publick, by diffusing innocent and rational pleasure.

The complete explanation of an author not systematick and consequential, but desultory and vagrant, abounding in casual allusions and light hints, is not to be expected from any single scholiast. All personal reflections, when names are suppressed, must be in a few years irrecoverably obliterated; and customs, too minute to attract the notice of law, such as modes of dress, formalities of conversation, rules of visits, disposition of furniture, and

practices of ceremony, which naturally find places in familiar dialogue, are so fugitive and unsubstantial, that they are not easily retained or recovered. What can be known will be collected by chance, from the recesses of obscure and obsolete papers, perused commonly with some other view. Of this knowledge every man has some, and none has much; but when an author has engaged the publick attention, those who can add any thing to his illustration, communicate their discoveries, and time produces what had eluded diligence.

To time I have been obliged to resign many passages, which, though I did not understand them, will perhaps hereafter be explained, having, I hope, illustrated some, which others have neglected or mistaken, sometimes by short remarks, or marginal directions, such as every editor has added at his will, and often by comments more laborious than the matter will seem to deserve; but that which is most difficult is not always most important, and to an editor nothing is a trifle by which his author is obscured.

The poetical beauties or defects I have not been very diligent to observe. Some plays have more, and some fewer judicial observations, not in proportion to their difference of merit, but because I gave this part of my design to chance and to caprice. The reader, I believe, is seldom pleased to find his opinion anticipated; it is natural to delight more in what we find or make, than in what we receive. Judgment, like other faculties, is improved by practice, and its advancement is hindered by submission to dictatorial decisions, as the memory grows torpid by the use of a table-book. Some initiation is however necessary; of all skill, part is infused by precept, and part is obtained by habit; I have therefore shewn so much as may enable the candidate of criticism to discover the rest.

To the end of most plays I have added short strictures, containing a general censure of faults, or praise of excellence; in which I know not how much I have concurred with the current opinion; but I have not, by any affectation of singularity, deviated from it. Nothing is
minutely

minutely and particularly examined, and therefore it is to be supposed, that in the plays which are condemned there is much to be praised, and in these which are praised much to be condemned.

The part of criticism in which the whole succession of editors has laboured with the greatest diligence, which has occasioned the most arrogant ostentation, and excited the keenest acrimony, is the emendation of corrupted passages, to which the publick attention having been first drawn by the violence of the contention between Pope and Theobald, has been continued by the persecution, which, with a kind of conspiracy, has been since raised against all the publishers of Shakspeare.

That many passages have passed in a state of depravation through all the editions is indubitably certain; of these the restoration is only to be attempted by collation of copies, or sagacity of conjecture. The collator's province is safe and easy, the conjecturer's perilous and difficult. Yet as the greater part of the plays are extant only in one copy, the peril must not be avoided, nor the difficulty refused.

Of the readings which this emulation of amendment has hitherto produced, some from the labours of every publisher I have advanced into the text; those are to be considered as in my opinion sufficiently supported; some I have rejected without mention, as evidently erroneous; some I have left in the notes without censure or approbation, as resting in equipoise between objection and defence; and some, which seemed specious but not right, I have inserted with a subsequent animadversion.

Having classed the observations of others, I was at last to try what I could substitute for their mistakes, and how I could supply their omissions. I collated such copies as I could procure, and wished for more, but have not found the collectors of these rarities very communicative. Of the editions which chance or kindness put into my hands I have given an enumeration, that I may not be blamed for neglecting what I had not the power to do.

By

By examining the old copies, I soon found that the later publishers, with all their boasts of diligence, suffered many passages to stand unauthorized, and contented themselves with Rowe's regulation of the text, even where they knew it to be arbitrary, and with a little consideration might have found it to be wrong. Some of these alterations are only the ejection of a word for one that appeared to him more elegant or more intelligible. These corruptions I have often silently rectified; for the history of our language, and the true force of our words, can only be preserved, by keeping the text of authors free from adulteration. Others, and those very frequent, smoothed the cadence, or regulated the measure; on these I have not exercised the same rigour; if only a word was transposed, or a particle inserted or omitted, I have sometimes suffered the line to stand; for the inconsistency of the copies is such, as that some liberties may be easily permitted. But this practice I have not suffered to proceed far, having restored the primitive diction wherever it could for any reason be preferred.

The emendations, which comparison of copies supplied, I have inserted in the text; sometimes, where the improvement was slight, without notice, and sometimes with an account of the reasons of the change.

Conjecture, though it be sometimes unavoidable, I have not wantonly nor licentiously indulged. It has been my settled principle, that the reading of the ancient books is probably true, and therefore is not to be disturbed for the sake of elegance, perspicuity, or mere improvement of the sense. For though much credit is not due to the fidelity, nor any to the judgment of the first publishers, yet they who had the copy before their eyes were more likely to read it right, than we who read it only by imagination. But it is evident that they have often made strange mistakes by ignorance or negligence, and that therefore something may be properly attempted by criticism, keeping the middle way between presumption and timidity.

Such criticism I have attempted to practise, and where any passage appeared inextricably perplexed, have endeavoured

endeavoured to discover how it may be recalled to sense, with least violence. But my first labour is, always to turn the old text on every side, and try if there be any interstice, through which light can find its way; nor would Huetius himself condemn me, as refusing the trouble of research, for the ambition of alteration. In this modest industry I have not been unsuccessful. I have rescued many lines from the violations of temerity, and secured many scenes from the inroads of correction. I have adopted the Roman sentiment, that it is more honourable to save a citizen, than to kill an enemy, and have been more careful to protect than to attack.

I have preserved the common distribution of the plays into acts, though I believe it to be in almost all the plays void of authority. Some of those which are divided in the later editions have no division in the first folio, and some that are divided in the folio have no division in the preceding copies. The settled mode of the theatre requires four intervals in the play, but few, if any, of our author's compositions can be properly distributed in that manner. An act is so much of the drama as passes without intervention of time, or change of place. A pause makes a new act. In every real, and therefore in every imitative action, the intervals may be more or fewer, the restriction of five acts being accidental and arbitrary. This Shakspeare knew, and this he practised; his plays were written, and at first printed in one unbroken continuity, and ought now to be exhibited with short pauses, interposed as often as the scene is changed, or any considerable time is required to pass. This method would at once quell a thousand absurdities.

In restoring the author's works to their integrity, I have considered the punctuation as wholly in my power; for what could be their care of colons and commas, who corrupted words and sentences. Whatever could be done by adjusting points, is therefore silently performed, in some plays, with much diligence, in others with less; it is hard to keep a busy eye steadily fixed upon evanescent atoms, or a discursive mind upon evanescent truth.

The same liberty has been taken with a few particles, or other words of slight effect. I have sometimes inserted or omitted them without notice. I have done that sometimes, which the other editors have done always, and which indeed the state of the text may sufficiently justify.

The greater part of readers, instead of blaming us for passing trifles, will wonder that on mere trifles so much labour is expended, with such importance of debate, and such solemnity of diction. To these I answer with confidence, that they are judging of an art which they do not understand; yet cannot much reproach them with their ignorance, nor promise that they would become in general, by learning criticism, more useful, happier, or wiser.

As I practised conjecture more, I learned to trust it less; and after I had printed a few plays, resolved to insert none of my own readings in the text. Upon this caution I now congratulate myself, for every day increases my doubt of my emendations.

Since I have confined my imagination to the margin, it must not be considered as very reprehensible, if I have suffered it to play some freaks in its own dominion. There is no danger in conjecture, if it be proposed as conjecture; and while the text remains uninjured, those changes may be safely offered, which are not considered even by him that offers them as necessary or safe.

If my readings are of little value, they have not been ostentatiously displayed or importunately obtruded. I could have written longer notes, for the art of writing notes is not of difficult attainment. The work is performed, first by railing at the stupidity, negligence, ignorance, and asinine tastelessness of the former editors, and shewing, from all that goes before and all that follows, the inelegance and absurdity of the old reading; then by proposing something, which to superficial readers would seem specious, but which the editor rejects with indignation; then by producing the true reading, with a long paraphrase, and concluding with loud acclamations

tions on the discovery, and a sober wish for the advancement and prosperity of genuine criticism.

All this may be done, and perhaps done sometimes without impropriety. But I have always suspected that the reading is right, which requires many words to prove it wrong; and the emendation wrong, that cannot without so much labour appear to be right. The justness of a happy restoration strikes at once, and the moral precept may be well applied to criticism, *quod dubitas ne feceris*.

To dread the shore which he sees spread with wrecks, is natural to the sailor. I had before my eye, so many critical adventures ended in miscarriage, that caution was forced upon me. I encountered in every page wit struggling with its own sophistry, and learning confused by the multiplicity of its views. I was forced to censure those whom I admired, and could not but reflect, while I was dispossessing their emendations, how soon the same fate might happen to my own, and how many of the readings which I have corrected may be by some other editor defended and established.

*Criticks I saw, that other's names efface,
And fix their own, with labour, in the place;
Their own, like others, soon their place resign'd,
Or disappear'd, and left the first behind.* POPE.

That a conjectural critick should often be mistaken, cannot be wonderful, either to others or himself, if it be considered, that in his art there is no system, no principal and axiomatical truth that regulates subordinate positions. His chance of error is renewed at every attempt; an oblique view of the passage, a slight misapprehension of a phrase, a casual inattention to the parts connected, is sufficient to make him not only fail, but fail ridiculously; and when he succeeds best, he produces perhaps but one reading of many probable, and he that suggests another will always be able to dispute his claims.

It is an unhappy state, in which danger is hid under pleasure. The allurements of emendation are scarcely resistible.

resistible. Conjecture has all the joy and all the pride of invention, and he that has once started a happy change, is too much delighted to consider what objections may rise against it.

Yet conjectural criticism has been of great use in the learned world; nor is it my intention to depreciate a study, that has exercised so many mighty minds, from the revival of learning to our own age, from the bishop of Aleria to English Bentley. The criticks on ancient authors have, in the exercise of their sagacity, many assistances, which the editor of Shakespeare is condemned to want. They are employed upon grammatical and settled languages, whose construction contributes so much to perspicuity, that Homer has fewer passages unintelligible than Chaucer. The words have not only a known regimen, but invariable quantities, which direct and confine the choice. There are commonly more manuscripts than one; and they do not often conspire in the same mistakes. Yet Scaliger could confess to Salmasius how little satisfaction his emendations gave him. *Illudunt nobis conjecturæ nostræ, quarum nos pudet, posteaquam in meliores codices incidimus.* And Lipsius could complain, that criticks were making faults, by trying to remove them, *Ut olim vitiis, ita nunc remediis laboratur.* And indeed, where mere conjecture is to be used, the emendations of Scaliger and Lipsius, notwithstanding their wonderful sagacity and erudition, are often vague and disputable, like mine or Theobald's.

Perhaps I may not be more censured for doing wrong, than for doing little; for raising in the publick expectations, which at last I have not answered. The expectation of ignorance is indefinite, and that of knowledge is often tyrannical. It is hard to satisfy those who know not what to demand, or those who demand by design what they think impossible to be done. I have indeed disappointed no opinion more than my own; yet I have endeavoured to perform my task with no slight solicitude. Not a single passage in the whole work has appeared to me corrupt, which I have not attempted to restore: or obscure, which I have not endeavoured to illustrate. In many I have failed like others; and from many, after
all

all my efforts, I have retreated, and confessed the repulse. I have not passed over, with affected superiority, what is equally difficult to the reader and to myself, but where I could not instruct him, have owned my ignorance. I might easily have accumulated a mass of seeming learning upon easy scenes; but it ought not to be imputed to negligence, that, where nothing was necessary, nothing has been done, or that, where others have said enough, I have said no more.

Notes are often necessary, but they are necessary evils. Let him, that is yet unacquainted with the powers of Shakspeare, and who desires to feel the highest pleasure that the drama can give, read every play, from the first scene to the last, with utter negligence of all his commentators. When his fancy is once on the wing, let it not stoop at correction or explanation. When his attention is strongly engaged, let it disdain alike to turn aside to the name of Theobald and of Pope. Let him read on through brightness and obscurity, through integrity and corruption; let him preserve his comprehension of the dialogue and his interest in the fable. And when the pleasures of novelty have ceased, let him attempt exactness, and read the commentators.

Particular passages are cleared by notes, but the general effect of the work is weakened. The mind is refrigerated by interruption; the thoughts are diverted from the principal subject; the reader is weary, he suspects not why; and at last throws away the book which he has too diligently studied.

Parts are not to be examined till the whole has been surveyed; there is a kind of intellectual remoteness necessary for the comprehension of any great work in its full design and in its true proportions; a close approach shews the smaller niceties, but the beauty of the whole is discerned no longer.

It is not very grateful to consider how little the succession of editors has added to this author's power of pleasing. He was read, admired, studied, and imitated, while he was yet deformed with all the improprieties which ignorance and neglect could accumulate upon him;

while the reading was yet not rectified, nor his allusions understood; yet then did Dryden pronounce, "that
 " Shakespeare was the man, who, of all modern and
 " perhaps ancient poets, had the largest and most comprehensive soul. All the images of nature were still
 " present to him, and he drew them not laboriously, but
 " luckily: when he describes any thing, you more than
 " see it, you feel it too. Those, who accuse him to have
 " wanted learning, give him the greater commendation: he was naturally learned: he needed not the
 " spectacles of books to read nature; he looked inwards,
 " and found her there. I cannot say he is every where
 " alike; were he so, I should do him injury to compare
 " him with the greatest of mankind. He is many times
 " flat and insipid; his comick wit degenerating into
 " clenches, his serious swelling into bombast. But he is
 " always great, when some great occasion is presented
 " to him: no man can say, he ever had a fit subject for
 " his wit, and did not then raise himself as high above
 " the rest of poets,

" Quantum lenta solent inter viburna cupressi."

It is to be lamented, that such a writer should want a commentary; that his language should become obsolete, or his sentiments obscure. But it is vain to carry wishes beyond the condition of human things; that which must happen to all, has happened to Shakspeare, by accident and time; and more than has been suffered by any other writer since the use of types, has been suffered by him through his own negligence of fame, or perhaps by that superiority of mind, which despised its own performances, when it compared them with its powers, and judged those works unworthy to be preserved, which the criticks of following ages were to contend for the fame of restoring and explaining.

Among these candidates of inferior fame, I am now to stand the judgment of the publick; and wish that I could confidently produce my commentary as equal to the encouragement which I have had the honour of receiving. Every work of this kind is by its nature deficient,
 and

and I should feel little solicitude about the sentence, were it to be pronounced only by the skilful and the learned.

Of what has been performed in this revival *, an account is given in the following pages by Mr. Steevens, who might have spoken both of his own diligence and sagacity, in terms of greater self-approbation, without deviating from modesty or truth. JOHNSON.

* This paragraph relates to the edition published in 1773, by George Steevens, Esq. MALONE.

MR. STEEVENS'S
ADVERTISEMENT
TO THE
READER.

THE want of adherence to the old copies, which has been complained of, in the text of every modern republication of Shakspeare, is fairly deducible from Mr. Rowe's inattention to one of the first duties of an editor†. Mr. Rowe did not print from the earliest and most correct, but from the most remote and inaccurate of the four folios. Between the years 1623 and 1685 (the dates of the first and last) the errors in every play, at least, were trebled. Several pages in each of these ancient editions have been examined, that the assertion might come more fully supported. It may be added, that as every fresh editor continued to make the text of his predecessor the ground-work of his own (never collating but where difficulties occurred) some deviations from the originals had been handed down, the number of which are lessened in the impression before us, as it

* First printed in 1773. MALONE.

† "I must not (says Mr. Rowe in his dedication to the duke of Somerset) pretend to have restor'd this work to the exactness of the author's original manuscripts: those are lost, or, at least, are gone beyond any inquiry I could make; so that there was nothing left, but to *compare the several editions*, and give the true reading as well as I could from thence. This I have endeavour'd to do pretty carefully, and render'd very many places intelligible, that were not so before. In some of the editions, especially the last, there were many lines (and in Hamlet one whole scene) left out together; these are now all supply'd. I fear your grace will find some faults, but I hope they are mostly literal, and the errors of the press." Would not any one, from this declaration, suppose that Mr. Rowe (who does not appear to have consulted a single quarto) had at least *compared* the folios with each other? STEEVENS.

has

has been constantly compared with the most authentic copies, whether collation was absolutely necessary for the recovery of sense, or not. The person who undertook this task may have failed by inadvertency, as well as those who preceded him; but the reader may be assured, that he, who thought it his duty to free an author from such modern and unnecessary innovations as had been censured in others, has not ventured to introduce any of his own.

It is not pretended that a complete body of various readings is here collected; or that all the diversities which the copies exhibit, are pointed out; as near two thirds of them are typographical mistakes, or such a change of insignificant particles, as would crowd the bottom of the page with an ostentation of materials, from which at last nothing useful could be selected.

The dialogue might indeed sometimes be lengthened by other insertions than have hitherto been made, but without advantage either to its spirit or beauty; as in the following instance:

Lear. No.

Kent. Yes.

Lear. No, I say.

Kent. I say, yea.

Here the quartos add:

Lear. No, no, they would not.

Kent. Yes, they have.

By the admission of this negation and affirmation, has any new idea been gained?

The labours of preceding editors have not left room for a boast, that many valuable readings have been retrieved; though it may be fairly asserted, that the text of Shakspeare is restored to the condition in which the author, or rather his first publishers, appear to have left it, such emendations as were absolutely necessary, alone admitted: for where a particle, indispensably necessary to the sense, was wanting, such a supply has been silently adopted from other editions; but where a syllable, or

more, had been added for the sake of the metre only; which at first might have been irregular, such interpolations are here constantly retrenched, sometimes with, and sometimes without notice. Those speeches, which in the elder editions are printed as prose, and from their own construction are incapable of being compressed into verse, without the aid of supplemental syllables, are restored to prose again; and the measure is divided afresh in others, where the mass of words had been inharmoniously separated into lines.

The scenery, throughout all the plays, is regulated in conformity to a rule, which the poet, by his general practice seems to have proposed to himself. Several of his pieces are come down to us, divided into scenes as well as acts. These divisions were probably his own, as they are made on settled principles, which would hardly have been the case, had the task been executed by the players. A change of scene, with Shakspeare, most commonly implies a change of place, but always, an entire evacuation of the stage. The custom of distinguishing every entrance or exit by a fresh scene, was adopted, perhaps very idly, from the French theatre.

For the length of many notes, and the accumulation of examples in others, some apology may be likewise expected. An attempt at brevity is often found to be the source of an imperfect explanation. Where a passage has been constantly misunderstood, or where the jest or pleasantry has been suffered to remain long in obscurity, more instances have been brought to clear the one, or elucidate the other, than appear at first sight to have been necessary. For these, it can only be said, that when they prove that phraseology or source of merriment to have been once general, which at present seems particular, they are not quite impertinently intruded; as they may serve to free the author from a suspicion of having employed an affected singularity of expression, or indulged himself in allusions to transient customs, which were not of sufficient notoriety to deserve ridicule or reprehension. When examples in favour of contradictory opinions are assembled, though no attempt is made to
decide

decide on either part, such neutral collections should always be regarded as materials for future critics, who may hereafter apply them with success. Authorities, whether in respect of words, or things, are not always producible from the most celebrated writers*; yet such circumstances as fall below the notice of history, can only be sought in the jest-book, the satire, or the play; and the novel, whose fashion did not outlive a week, is sometimes necessary to throw light on those annals which take in the compass of an age. Those, therefore, who would wish to have the peculiarities of Nym familiarized to their ideas, must excuse the insertion of such an epigram

* Mr. T. Warton in his excellent *Remarks on the Faery Queen of Spenser*, offers a similar apology for having introduced illustrations from obsolete literature. "I fear (says he) I shall be censured for quoting too many pieces of this sort. But experience has fatally proved, that the commentator on Spenser, Jonson, and the rest of our elder poets, will in vain give specimens of his classical erudition, unless, at the same time, he brings to his work a mind intimately acquainted with those books, which, though now forgotten, were yet in common use and high repute about the time in which his authors respectively wrote, and which they consequently must have read. While these are unknown, many allusions and many imitations will either remain obscure, or lose half their beauty and propriety: "as the figures vanish when the canvas is decayed."

"Pope laughs at Theobald for giving us, in his edition of SHAKSPEARE, a sample of

— all such READING as was never read.

But these strange and ridiculous books which Theobald quoted, were unluckily the very books which SHAKSPEARE himself had studied; the knowledge of which enabled that useful editor to explain so many difficult allusions and obsolete customs in his poet, which otherwise could never have been understood. For want of this sort of literature, Pope tells us that the *dreadful Sagittary* in *Troilus and Cressida*, signifies Teucer, so celebrated for his skill in archery. Had he deigned to consult an old history, called the *Destruction of Troy*, a book which was the delight of SHAKSPEARE and of his age, he would have found that this formidable archer, was no other than an imaginary beast, which the Grecian army brought against Troy. If SHAKSPEARE is worth reading, he is worth explaining; and the researches used for so valuable and elegant a purpose, merit the thanks of genius and candour, not the satire of prejudice and ignorance. That labour, which so essentially contributes to the service of true taste, deserves a more honourable repository than *The Temple of Dullness*." STEEVENS.

as best suits the purpose, however tedious in itself; and such as would be acquainted with the propriety of Falstaff's allusion to *stewed prunes*, should not be disgusted at a multitude of instances, which, when the point is once known to be established, may be diminished by any future editor. An author, who *catches* (as Pope expresses it) at *the Cynthia of a minute*, and does not furnish notes to his own works, is sure to lose half the praise which he might have claimed, had he dealt in allusions less temporary, or cleared up for himself those difficulties which lapse of time must inevitably create.

The author of the additional notes has rather been desirous to support old readings, than to claim the merit of introducing new ones. He desires to be regarded as one, who found the task he undertook more arduous than it seemed, while he was yet feeding his vanity with the hopes of introducing himself to the world as an editor in form. He, who has discovered in himself the power to rectify a few mistakes with ease, is naturally led to imagine, that all difficulties must yield to the efforts of future labour; and perhaps feels a reluctance to be undeceived at last.

Mr. Steevens desires it may be observed, that he has strictly complied with the terms exhibited in his proposals, having appropriated all such assistances, as he received, to the use of the present editor, whose judgment has, in every instance, determined on their respective merits. While he enumerates his obligations to his correspondents, it is necessary that one comprehensive remark should be made on such communications as are omitted in this edition, though they might have proved of great advantage to a more daring commentator. The majority of these were founded on the supposition, that Shakspeare was originally an author correct in the utmost degree, but maimed and interpolated by the neglect or presumption of the players. In consequence of this belief, alterations have been proposed wherever a verse could be harmonized, an epithet exchanged for one more apposite, or a sentiment rendered less perplexed. Had the general current of advice been followed, the notes
would

would have been filled with attempts at emendation apparently unnecessary, though sometimes elegant, and as frequently with explanations of what none would have thought difficult. A constant peruser of Shakspeare will suppose whatever is easy to his own apprehension, will prove so to that of others, and consequently may pass over some real perplexities in silence. On the contrary, if in consideration of the different abilities of every class of readers, he should offer a comment on all harsh inversions of phrase, or peculiarities of expression, he will at once excite the disgust and displeasure of such as think their own knowledge or sagacity undervalued. It is difficult to fix a medium between doing too little and too much in the task of mere explanation. There are yet many passages unexplained and unintelligible, which may be reformed, at hazard of whatever licence, for exhibitions on the stage, in which the pleasure of the audience is chiefly to be considered; but must remain untouched by the critical editor, whose conjectures are limited by narrow bounds, and who gives only what he at least supposes his author to have written.

If it is not to be expected that each vitiated passage in Shakspeare can be restored, till a greater latitude of experiment shall be allowed; so neither can it be supposed that the force of all his allusions will be pointed out, till such books are thoroughly examined, as cannot easily at present be collected, if at all. Several of the most correct lists of our dramattick pieces exhibit the titles of plays, which are not to be met with in the completest collections. It is almost unnecessary to mention any other than Mr. Garrick's, which, curious and extensive as it is, derives its greatest value from its accessibility*.

To

* There is reason to think that about the time of the Reformation, great numbers of plays were printed, though few of that age are now to be found; for part of queen Elizabeth's INJUNCTIONS in 1559, are particularly directed to the suppressing of "Many pamphlets, PLAYES, and ballads: that no manner of person shall enterprize to print any such, &c. but under certain restrictions." Vid. Sect. V. This observation is taken from Dr. Percy's Additions to his Essay on

To the other evils of our civil war must be added the interruption of polite learning, and the suppression of many dramatic and poetical names, which were plunged in obscurity by tumults and revolutions, and have never since attracted curiosity. The utter neglect of ancient English literature continued so long, that many books may be supposed to be lost; and that curiosity, which has been now for some years increasing among us, wants materials for its operations. Books and pamphlets,

the *Origin of the English Stage*. It appears likewise from a page at the conclusion of the second Vol. of the entries belonging to the Stationer's company, that in the 41st year of queen Elizabeth, many new restraints on booksellers were laid. Among these are the following, "That no plaies be printed excepte they bee allowed by such as have auctoritie." The records of the Stationers however contain the entries of some which have never yet been met with by the most successful collectors; nor are their titles to be found in any registers of the stage, whether ancient or modern. It should seem from the same volumes that it was customary for the Stationers to seize the whole impression of any work that had given offence, and burn it publicly at their hall, in obedience to the edicts of the archbishop of Canterbury, and the bishop of London, who sometimes enjoyed these literary executions at their respective palaces. Among other works condemned to the flames by these discerning prelates, were the complete satires of bishop Hall.

Mr. Theobald, at the conclusion of the preface to his first edition of Shakspeare, asserts, that exclusive of the dramas of Ben Jonson, and B. and Fletcher, he had read "above 800 of old English plays." He omitted this assertion, however, on the republication of the same work, and, I hope, he did so, through a consciousness of its utter falshood; for if we except the plays of the authors already mentioned, it would be difficult to discover half the number that were written early enough to serve the purpose for which he pretends to have perused this imaginary stock of ancient literature.

I might add, that the private collection of Mr. Theobald, which, including the plays of Jonson, Fletcher and Shakspeare, did not amount to many more than an hundred, remained entire in the hands of the late Mr. Tonson, till the time of his death. It does not appear that any other collection but the Harleian was at that time formed; nor does Mr. Theobald's edition contain any intrinsic evidences of so comprehensive an examination of our eldest dramatic writers, as he assumes to himself the merit of having made. STEEVENS.

There were about five hundred and fifty plays printed before the Restoration, exclusive of those written by Shakspeare, Jonson, and Fletcher. MALONE.

printed

MR. STEEVENS'S ADVERTISEMENT. 57

printed originally in small numbers, being thus neglected, were soon destroyed; and though the capital authors were preserved, they were preserved to languish without regard. How little Shakspeare himself was once read, may be understood from Tate*, who, in his dedication to the altered play of *King Lear*, speaks of the original as of an obscure piece, recommended to his notice by a friend; and the author of the *Tatler*, having occasion to quote a few lines out of *Macbeth*, was content to receive them from D'Avenant's alteration of that celebrated drama, in which almost every original beauty is either awkwardly disguised, or arbitrarily omitted. So little were the defects or peculiarities of the old writers known, even at the beginning of our century, that though the custom of alliteration had prevailed to that degree in the time of Shakspeare, that it became contemptible and ridiculous, yet it is made one of Waller's praises by a writer of his life, that he first introduced this practice into English versification.

It will be expected that some notice should be taken of the last editor of Shakspeare, and that his merits should be estimated with those of his predecessors. Little, however, can be said of a work, to the completion of which, both a large proportion of the commentary and various readings is as yet wanting. *The Second Part of King Henry VI.* is the only play from that edition, which has been consulted in the course of this work; for as several passages there are arbitrarily omitted, and as no notice is given when other deviations are made from the old copies, it was of little consequence to examine any further. This circumstance is mentioned, lest such accidental coincidences of opinion, as may be discovered hereafter, should be interpreted into plagiarism.

It may occasionally happen, that some of the remarks long ago produced by others, are offered again as recent discoveries. It is likewise absolutely impossible to pronounce with any degree of certainty, whence all the

* In the year 1707 Mr. N. Tate published a tragedy called *Injured Love, or the Cruel Husband*, and in the title-page of it calls himself, "Author of the tragedy called *King Lear*." STEEVENS.

58 MR. STEEVENS'S ADVERTISEMENT.

hints, which furnish matter for a commentary, have been collected, as they lay scattered in many books and papers, which were probably never read but once, or the particulars which they contain received only in the course of common conversation; nay, what is called plagiarism, is often no more than the result of having thought alike with others on the same subject.

The dispute about the learning of Shakspeare being now finally settled, a catalogue is added of those translated authors, whom Mr. Pope has thought proper to call

The classics of an age that heard of none.

The reader may not be displeased to have the Greek and Roman poets, orators, &c. who had been rendered accessible to our author, exposed at one view; especially as the list has received the advantage of being corrected and amplified by the Reverend Dr. Farmer, the substance of whose very decisive pamphlet is interspersed through the notes which are added in this revival of Dr. Johnson's Shakspeare.

To those who have advanced the reputation of our Poet, it has been endeavoured, by Dr. Johnson, in the foregoing preface, impartially to allot their dividend of fame; and it is with great regret that we now add to the catalogue, another, the consequence of whose death will perhaps affect not only the works of Shakspeare, but of many other writers. Soon after the first appearance of this edition, a disease, rapid in its progress, deprived the world of Mr. JACOB TONSON; a man, whose zeal for the improvement of English literature, and whose liberality to men of learning, gave him a just title to all the honours which men of learning can bestow. To suppose that a person employed in an extensive trade, lived in a state of indifference to loss and gain, would be to conceive a character incredible and romantic; but it may be justly said of Mr. TONSON, that he had enlarged his mind beyond solicitude about petty losses, and refined it from the desire of unreasonable profit. He was willing to admit those with whom he contracted, to the just advantage

advantage of their own labours ; and had never learned to consider the author as an under-agent to the book-seller. The wealth which he inherited or acquired, he enjoyed like a man conscious of the dignity of a profession subservient to learning. His domestic life was elegant, and his charity was liberal. His manners were soft, and his conversation delicate : nor is, perhaps, any quality in him more to be censured, than that reserve which confined his acquaintance to a small number, and made his example less useful, as it was less extensive. He was the last commercial name of a family which will be long remembered ; and if Horace thought it not improper to convey the *SOSII* to posterity ; if rhetoric suffered no dishonour from Quintilian's dedication to *TRYPHO* ; let it not be thought that we disgrace Shakspeare, by appending to his works the name of *TONSON*.

To this prefatory advertisement I have now subjoined * a chapter extracted from the *Guls Hornbook*, (a satirical pamphlet written by Decker in the year 1609) as it affords the reader a more complete idea of the customs peculiar to our ancient theatres, than any other publication which has hitherto fallen in my way. See this performance, page 27.

“ C H A P. VI.

How a Gallant should behave himself in a Play-house.

The *theatre* is your poet's Royal Exchange, upon which, their muses (that are now turn'd to merchants) meeting, barter away that light commodity of words for a lighter ware than words, *plaudities* and the *breath* of the great *beast*, which (like the threatnings of two cowards) vanish all into aire. *Plaiers* and their *factors*, who put away the stufte and make the best of it they possibly can (as indeed 'tis their parts so to doe) your gallant, your courtier, and your capten, had wont to be the soundest pay-masters, and I thinke are still the surest chapmen : and these by meanes that their heades are

* This addition to Mr. Steevens's Advertisement was made in 1778.

60 MR: STEEVENS'S ADVERTISEMENT.

well stockt, deale upon this comical freight by the grosse ; when your *groundling*, and *gallery commoner* buyes his sport by the penny, and, like a *bagler*, is glad to utter it againe by retailing.

Sithence then the place is so free in entertainment, allowing a stoole as well to the farmer's sonne as to your Templer: that your stinkard has the self same libertie to be there in his tobacco-fumes, which your sweet courtier hath: and that your carman and tinker claime as strong a voice in their suffrage, and sit to give judgment on the plaies' life and death, as well as the proudest *Momus* among the tribe of *critick* ; it is fit that hee, whom the most tailors' bills do make room for, when he comes, should not be basely (like a *vyoll*) cas'd up in a corner.

Whether therefore the gatherers of the publique or private play-house stand to receive the afternoone's rent, let our gallant (having paid it) presently advance himselfe up to the throne of the stage. I meane not in the lords' roome (which is now but the stage's suburbs.) No, those boxes by the iniquity of custome, conspiracy of waiting-women and gentlemen-ushers, that there sweat together, and the covetous sharers, are contemptibly thrust into the reare, and much new fatten is there dambd by being smothered to death in darknesse. But on the very rushes where the comedy is to daunce, yea and under the state of *Cambises* himselfe must our feather'd estridge, like a piece of ordnance be planted valiantly (because impudently) beating downe the mewes and hisses of the opposed rascality.

For do but cast up a reckoning, what large cummings in are purs'd up by sitting on the stage. First a conspicuous eminence is gotten, by which meanes the best and most effenciall parts of a gallant (good cloathes, a proportionable legge, white hand, the Persian locke, and a tollerable beard,) are perfectly revealed.

By sitting on the stage you have a sign'd pattent to engrosse the whole commodity of censure ; may lawfully presume to be a girder ; and stand at the helme to steere the passage of scænes, yet no man shall once offer to hider you from obtaining the title of an insolent overweening coxcombe.

By

MR. STEEVENS'S ADVERTISEMENT. 61

By sitting on the stage, you may (without traueelling for it) at the very next doore, aske whose play it is: and by that quest of inquiry, the law warrants you to avoid much mistaking: if you know not the author, you may raile against him; and peradventure so behave yourselfe, that you may enforce the author to know you.

By sitting on the stage, if you be a knight, you may happily get you a mistresse: if a mere *Fleet-street* gentleman, a wife: but assure yourselfe by continuall residence, you are the first and principall man in election to begin the number of *We three*.

By spreading your body on the stage, and by being a iustice in examining of plaies, you shall put yourselfe into such a true scænicall authority, that some poet shall not dare to present his muse rudely before your eyes, without having first unmaskt her, risled her, and discovered all her bare and most mystical parts before you at a taverne, when you most knightly, shal for his paines, pay for both their suppers.

By sitting on the stage, you may (with small cost) purchase the deere acquaintance of the boyes: have a good shoole for sixpence: at any time know what particular part any of the infants present: get your match lighted, examine the play-suits' lace, and perhaps win wagers upon laying 'tis copper, &c. And to conclude, whether you be a foole or a iustice of peace, a cuckold or a capten, a lord maior's sonne or a dawcocke, a knave or an under shrieve, of what stamp soever you be, currant or counterfet, the stagelike time will bring you to most perfect light, and lay you open: neither are you to be hunted from thence though the scar-crowes in the yord hoot you, hisse at you, spit at you, yea throw dirt even in your teeth: 'tis most gentleman-like patience to endure all this, and to laugh at the silly animals. But if the rabble, with a full throat, crie away with the foole, you were worse than a mad-man to tarry by it: for the gentleman and the foole should never sit on the stage together.

Mary, let this obseruation go hand in hand with the rest: or rather, like a country-serving man, some five yards before them. Present not your selfe on the stage
(especially

62 MR. STEEVENS'S ADVERTISEMENT.

(especially at a new play) untill the quaking prologue hath (by rubbing) got cullor into his cheekes, and is ready to give the trumpets their cue that hees upon point to enter: for then it is time, as though you were one of the *properties*, or that you dropt of the *hangings* to creep from behind the arras, with your *tripos* or three-legged stoole in one hand, and a teston mounted betweene a fore-finger and a thumbe, in the other: for if you should bestow your person upon the vulgar, when the belly of the house is but halfe full, your apparell is quite eaten up, the fashion lost, and the proportion of your body in more danger to be devoured, then if it were served up in the Counter amongst the Poultry: avoid that as you would the bastome. It shall crowne you with rich commendation to laugh alowd in the middest of the most serious and saddest scene of the terriblest tragedy: and to let that clapper (your tongue) be tost so high that all the house may ring of it: your lords use it; your knights are apes to the lords, and do so too: your inne-a-court-man is zany to the knights, and (many very scurvily) comes likewise limping after it: bee thou a beagle to them all, and never lin snuffing till you have sented them: for by talking and laughing (like a ploughman in a morris) you heape *Pelion* upon *Ossa*, glory upon glory: as first all the eyes in the galleries will leave walking after the players, and onely follow you: the simplest dolt in the house snatches up your name, and when he meetes you in the streetes, or that you fall into his hands in the middle of a watch, his word shall be taken for you: heele cry, *Hees such a gallant*, and you passe. Secondly you publish your temperance to the world, in that you seeme not to resort thither to taste vaine pleasures with a hungrie appetite; but onely as a gentleman, to spend a foolish houre or two, because you can doe nothing else. Thirdly you mightily disrelish the audience, and disgrace the author: marry, you take up (though it be at the worst hand) a strong opinion of your owne judgement, and inforce the poet to take pity of your weakenesse, and by some dedicated sonnet to bring you into a better paradise, onely to stop your mouth.

If

MR. STEEVENS'S ADVERTISEMENT. 63

If you can (either for love or money) provide your selfe a lodging by the water side: for above the conveniencie it brings to shun shoulder-clapping, and to ship away your cockatrice betimes in the morning, it addes a kind of state unto you, to be carried from thence to the staires of your play-houſe: hate a ſculler (remember that) worſe then to be acquainted with one ath' ſcullery. No, your oares are your onely ſea-crabs, boord them, and take heed you never go twice together with one paire: often ſhifting is a great credit to gentlemen: and that dividing of your fare wil make the poore waterſnaks be ready to pul you in peeces to enjoy your cuſtome. No matter whether upon landing you have money or no; you may swim in twentie of their boates over the river upon *ticket*: mary, when ſilver comes in, remember to pay trebble their fare, and it will make your flounder-catchers to ſend more thankes after you, when you doe not draw, then when you doe: for they know, it will be their owne another daie.

Before the play begins, fall to cardes; you may win or looſe (as fencers doe in a prize) and beate one another by confederacie, yet ſhare the money when you meete at ſupper: notwithstanding, to gul the ragga-muffins that ſtand a looſe gaping at you, throw the cards (having firſt torne four or five of them) round about the ſtage, juſt upon the third ſound, as though you had loſt: it ſkils not if the four knaves ly on their backs, and out-face the audience, there's none ſuch fooles as dare take exceptions at them, becauſe ere the play go off, better knaves than they, will fall into the company.

Now, Sir, if the writer be a fellow that hath either epigram'd you, or hath had a flirt at your miſtris, or hath brought either your feather, or your red beard, or your little legs, &c. on the ſtage, you ſhall diſgrace him worſe then by toſſing him in a blanket, or giving him the baſtinado in a taverne, if in the middle of his play, (bee it paſtorall or comedy, morall or tragedie) you riſe with a ſkreud and diſcontented face from your ſtoole to be gone: no matter whether the ſcenes be good or no; the better they are, the worſe doe you diſtaſt them: and beeing on your feete, ſneake not away like a coward,

64 MR. STEEVENS'S ADVERTISEMENT.

but salute all your gentle acquaintance that are spread either on the rushes or on stools about you, and draw what troop you can from the stage after you: the *mimicks* are beholden to you, for allowing them elbow room: their poet cries perhaps, a pox go with you, but care not you for that; there's no musick without frets.

Mary, if either the company, or indisposition of the weather binde you to sit it out, my counsell is then that you turne plaine ape: take up a rush and tickle the earnest eares of your fellow gallants, to make other fooles fall a laughing: mew at the passionate speeches, blare at merrie, finde fault with the musicke, whewe at the children's action, whistle at the songs; and above all, curse the sharers, that whereas the same day you had bestowed forty shillings on an embroidered felt and feather (Scotch-fashion) for your mistres in the court, or your punck in the cittie, within two houres after, you encounter with the very same block on the stage, when the haberdasher swore to you the impression was extant but that morning.

To conclude, hoord up the finest play-scraps you can get, upon which your leane wit may most favourly feede, for want of other stufte, when the *Arcadian* and *Euphuist's* gentlewomen have their tongues sharpened to set upon you: that qualitie (next to your shittlecocke) is the only furniture to a courtier that's but a new beginner, and is but in his ABC of complement. The next places that are fill'd after the play-houses bee emptied, are (or ought to be) tavernes: into a taverne then let us next march, where the braines of one hoghead must be beaten out to make up another."

I should have attempted on the present occasion to enumerate all other pamphlets, &c. from whence particulars relative to the conduct of our early theatres might be collected, but that Dr. Percy, in his first volume of the *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*, (third edit. p. 128, &c.) has extracted such passages from them as tend to the illustration of this subject; to which he has added more accurate remarks than my experience in these matters would have enabled me to supply. STEEVENS.

ANCIENT

ANCIENT TRANSLATIONS

FROM

CLASSICK AUTHORS*.

HOMER.

TEN Bookes of the Iliades into English out of French, by Arthur Hall, Esquire. Lond. imprinted by Ralph Newberie, 4to†. — 1581

The Shield of Achilles from the 18th Book of Homer, by Geo. Chapman, 4to. Lond. — 1596

Seven Books of the Iliades, by ditto, 4to†. Lond. 1596 D^o. — — — 1598

⌘ Homer Prince of Poets: Translated according to the Greeke in Twelve Bookes of his Iliads: By Geo. Chapman; small folio. Lond. printed for Samuel Macham. *No date.*

[This, I believe, was published in 1609. There are several Sonnets at the end, addressed to different noblemen; among them one, “to the *Lord Treasurer*, the Earle of Salisbury.” See also the entry below.]

The whole Works of Homer, by do. printed for Nath. Butler; *no date*, but probably printed in 1611

The Crowne of all Homer's Works, Batrachomymachia, &c. ‡[By Geo. Chapman, with his portrait in the

* This List was drawn up by Mr. Steevens. I have made a few inconsiderable additions to it, which are distinguished by this mark ⌘.

MALONE.

† In the first vol. of the books of entries belonging to the Stationers' company is the following:

“Henry Bynneman.] Nov. 1580, lycensed unto him under the wardens' hands ten bookes of the Iliades of Homer.” Again, Samuel Macham.] Nov. 14, 1608. “Seven bookes of Homer's Iliades translated into English by Geo. Chapman.—[By assignment from Mr. Windett.] Again, Nathaniel Butter] April 8, 1611, “A booke called Homer's Iliades in Englishe, containing 24 Bookes. Again, Nov. 2, 1614, “Homer's Odissies 24 bookes, translated by George Chapman.

‡ Meres, in his *Second Part of Wits Commonwealtb*, says, that *Chapman* is “of good note for his inchoate Homer.”

VOL. I.

[E]

title.

66 ANCIENT TRANSLATIONS.

title-page.] thin folio; printed by John Bill.

no date*.

The strange wonderfull and bloody Battel between Frogs
and Mife; paraphraſtically done into Engliſh He-
roycall Verſe, by W. F. (i. e. William Fowldes,)

4to.

—

—

1603

HESIOD.

The Georgicks of Heſiod, by George Chapman, trans-
lated elaborately out of the Greek. Printed by
H. L. for Miles Partrich, 4to.

—

1618

MUSÆUS.

Marloe's Hero and Leander, with the firſt Book of
Lucan, 4to.

—

—

—

1600

*There muſt have been a former Edition †, as a ſecond Part
was publiſhed by Henry Petowe,*

—

1598

Musæus's Poem of Hero and Leander, imitated by
Chriſtopher Marlow, and finiſhed by Geo. Chap-
man, 8vo. Lond.

—

—

1606

EURIPIDES.

Jocasta, a Tragedy, from the Phœniſſa of Euripides, by

* In the firſt volume of the Entries of the Stationers' Company is
the following:

"T. Purſoote,] The Battel of the Frogges and Myce, and certain
orations of Iſocrates. Jan. 4, 1579.

† This tranſlation, or at leaſt Marlow's part in it, muſt have been
publiſhed before 1599, being twice mentioned in Naſh's *Lenten Stuff*,
&c. which bears that date. "*Leander and Hero*, of whom divine
Musæus ſung, and a diviner muſe than him, *Kit Marlowe*." Again,
"She ſprung after him, and ſo reſigned up her prieſthood, and left
worke for *Musæus* and *Kit Marlowe*!"

Among the entries at Stationers' hall I find the following made by
John Wolfe in 1593, Sept. 8th, "A booke entitled *Hero and Lean-
der*, being an amorous poem deviſed by Chriſtopher Marlow."

At the ſame time, "Lucan's firſt booke of the famous *Cyvil Warr*
betwixt Pompey and Cæſar. Engliſhed by Chriſtopher Marlow."

Again, in 1597, "A booke in Engliſh called *Hero and Leander*."

Again, April 1598, "The ſeconde Parte of *Hero and Leander* by
Henry Petowe." Andrew Harris enter'd it.

Again, in 1600, "*Hero and Leander* by Marlowe."

In 1614 an entire tranſlation of Lucan was publiſhed by Sir Arthur
Gorges, and enter'd as ſuch on the ſame books.

Geo.

ANCIENT TRANSLATIONS. 67

Geo. Gascoigne, and Mr. Francis Kinwelmershe,
4to. Lond. — — — 1556

P L A T O.

Axiochus, a Dialogue, attributed to Plato, by Edm.
Spenser, 4to*. — — — 1592

D E M O S T H E N E S.

The Three Orations of Demosthenes, chiefe Orator
among the Grecians, in Favour of the Olynthians,
with those his sower against Philip of Macedon, &c.
by Tho. Wylson, Doctor of the Civill Lawes, 4to.
1570

I S O C R A T E S.

Isocrates's sage Admonition to Demonicus, by R. Nutt-
hall, 8vo. Lond. 1557, 12mo. and 1585

Isocrates's Doctrinal of Princes, by Syr Tho. Elliot,
Lond. 8vo. — — — 1534

Isocrates's Orat. intituled Evagoras, by Jer. Wolfe, 8vo.
1581

Three Orations of moral Instructions, one to Demonicus,
and two to Nicocles, King of Salamis, translated
from Isocrates, by Tho. Forrest, 4to. 1580

L U C I A N.

Necromantia, a Dialog of the Poete Lucyen between
Menippus and Philonides, for his Fantefye faynd
for a mery Pastyme, in English Verse and Latin
Prose.

Toxaris, or the Friendship of Lucian, by A. O. Lond.
8vo. — — — 1565

H E R O D O T U S.

The famous Hystory of Herodotus†, in nine Bookes, &c.
by B. R. Lond. — — — 1584

N. B. *This Piece contains only the two first Books, viz.*

* This book was entered in May 1592, at Stationers' hall.

† Among the entries in the books at Stationers'-hall this appears to
be one.

“ John Denham.] The famous Historye of Herodotus in Englyshe,
June 13, 1581.”

the Clio and Euterpe. The Translator says in his Preface, "As these speede, so the rest will follow."
4to.

THUCYDIDES.

The Hystory writtome by Thucydides, &c. translated out of the Frenche of Claude de Seyssel, Bishop of Marfeilles, into the Englishe language, by Tho. Nicolls, Citizeine and Goldsmyth of London, fol. 1559*

POLYBIUS.

Hystories of the most famous and worthy Cronographer, Polybius, by Christopher Watton, 8vo. 1568
This Work consists of extracts only.

DIODORUS SICULUS†.

The History of the Successors of Alexander, &c. out of Diodorus Siculus and Plutarch, by Tho. Stocker. Lond. 4to. — — — 1569

APPIAN.

An aunciente Historie, &c. by Appian † of Alexandria, translated out of diverse Languages, &c. by W. B. 4to. Lond. — — — 1578

JOSEPHUS.

Josephus's History, &c. translated into English, by Tho. Lodge, fol. Lond. 1602—1609, &c.

ÆLIAN.

Ælian's Registre of Hystories, by Abraham Fleming, 4to. — — — 1576

* On the Stationers' books in 1607 either this or some other translation is entered, called "The History of Thucydides the Athenian translated into English."

† Caxton tells us, that "Skelton had translated *Diodorus Siculus, the Epistles of Tulle*, and diverse other Workes:" but I know not that they were ever printed.

‡ In the first volume of the entries in the books of the Stationers' company, Feb. 5, 1577, is the following:

"Henry Binneman.] Appianus Alexandrinus of the Romaine Civill Warres."

HERODIAN.

HERODIAN.

The Historie of Herodian, &c. transl. oute of Greeke into Latin, by Angelus Politianus, and out of Latin into Englyshe, by Nich. Smyth. Imprinted at London, by William Copland, 4to*.

PLUTARCH.

Plutarch's Lives†, by Sir Tho. North, from the Fr. of Amyot, Bishop of Auxerre, fol. 1579, 1602, 1603

Plutarch's Morals, by Dr. Philemon Holland 1603‡

Plutarch of the Education of Children, by Sir Tho. Elyott, 4to.

The Preceptes of that excellent Clerke and grave Philosopher, Plutarche, for the Preservation of Healthe, 8vo. — — — 1543

ARISTOTLE.

The Ethiques of Aristotle, &c. by John Wylkinson. Printed by Grafton, Printer to K. Edw. VI. 8vo. B. L. — — — 1547§

The Secrete of Secretes of Aristotle, &c. translated out of the Frenche, &c. Lond. 8vo. — 1528

Aristotle's Politiques, &c ||. from the Fr. by J. D. fol. Lond. — — — 1598

* Oct. 1597, *Herodian in English* was entered at Stationers'-hall by — Adams.

† Thus entered in the books of the Stationers' company.

“ April 1579—Vatrouller—Wright, a booke in Englishe called Plutarch's Lyves.”

‡ On the Stationers' books in the year 1600 is the following entry.

“ A booke to be translated out of Frenche into Englishe, and so printed, called the Morall Woorkes of Plutarque.” Again in 1602. Again in the same year, “ The moral worke of Plutarque, being translated out of French into English.”

§ Of the *Ethicks of Aristotle* some more early translation must have appeared; as Sir Tho. Elyot in his *Boke named the Governour*, 1537, says, “ they are to be learned in Greke; for the translations that we have, be but a rude and grosse shadowe of the eloquence and wysdome of Aristotle.”

|| This translation is entered in the books at Stationers'-hall. “ Adam [Slip] Aristotle's Politiques with expositions; to be translated into Englishe by the French copie, 1598.”

70 ANCIENT TRANSLATIONS

XENOPHON.

The eight Bookes of Xenophon, containing the Institution, Schole, and Education of Cyrus, the noble King of Persye, &c. transl. out of Gr. into Engl. by Mr. William Bercher. Lond. 12mo. 1567 and 1569 D^o. by Dr. Philemon Holland.

Xenophon's Treatise of House-hold right, connyngly transl. out of the Greke tongue, &c. by Gentian Hervet, &c. 8vo. Lond. 1532. 8vo. 1534. 1544. 8vo. 1573

The Arte of Riding from Xenophon, &c. Lond. 4to. 1584

EPICTETUS*.

The Manuell of Epictetus, transl. out of Greeke into French, and now into English, &c. Also the Apothegmes, &c. by James Sandford. Lond. 12mo. 1567

EUNAPIUS SARDIANUS†.

The Lyves of Philosophers and Orators, from the Greek of Eunapius, 4to. — — 1579

ACHILLES TATIUS.

The most delectable and pleasant Hist. of Clitophon and Leucippe, from the Greek of Achilles Statius, &c. by W. B. 4to. — — 1597‡

M. ANTONINUS§.

The Golden Boke of Marcus Aurelius, Emperour and eloquent Orator, 12mo. Lond. — 1553
Translated

* In the books of the Stationers' company, Feb. 12, 1581, Tho. Easse entered Enchiridion in English.

† Thus entered in the books of the Stationers' company. "Richard Jones.] The Lives of divers excellent Orators and Philosophers written in Greeke by Enapius of the city of Sardis in Lydia, and translated into Englishe by —."

‡ This book was entered in the same year by Thomas Creede, on the books of the Stationers' company.

§ This book is only introduced, that an opportunity may be obtained of excluding it from any future catalogue of translated classics. It was a fraud of Guevara's, but not undetected; for Chapman, in his *Gentleman Usher*, 1602, speaks of the book as Guevara's own. "If there

ANCIENT TRANSLATIONS. 71

Translated out of Fr. into Eng. by Sir John Bouchier,
Kt. &c. &c.

Other editions of this are in 1534, 1535, 1536, 1537, 1559.
1586, 1588.

DIONYSIUS.

Dionysius's Description of the Worlde. Englyshed by
Tho. Twine, 8vo. Lond. — 1572

E U C L I D.

Euclid's Elements of Geometry, transl. into Eng. by
Rich. Candish, who flourished, A.D. 1556
Euclid's Elements, Pref. by John Dee. Lond. 1570

HIPPOCRATES.

The Aphorismes of Hippocrates, redacted into a certaine
Order, and translated by Humfrie Llhyd, 8vo. 1585

G A L E N.

Galen's Two Books of Elements, translated into Engl. by
J. Jones, 4to. Lond. — — 1574
Certaine Workes of Galen, englyshed by Tho. Gale, 4to.
1586

H E L I O D O R U S.

The Beginning of Æthiopical History in Engl. Hexame-
ters, by Abrah. Fraunce, 8vo. Lond. 1591*
Heliodorus's Æthiopic Hist. transl. by Tho. Underdown,
B. L. 4to. Lond. — 1577 and 1587

V I R G I L.

The Boke of Eneydos, &c. by Caxton, fol. Lond. *prose*
1490
The thirteen Bukes of Eneados in Scottish Metir, by
Gawain Douglas, 4to. Lond. — 1553

there be not more choice words in that letter, than in any three of
Guevara's Golden Epistles, I am a very afs." See his article in Bayle.
Our countryman Elyott did somewhat of the same kind. He pretended
to translate the *Ætes* and Sentences notable, of the Emperor *Alexander*
Severus (from the Greek of *Encolpius*). See *Fabricius*' and *Tanner's*
Bibliothec. &c.

* A translation of the same book is likewise entered at Stationers'
hall 1602, and again twice in 1604, for different printers.

- Certain Bookes of Virgiles *Æneis** turned into English Metir, by the right honourable Lorde, Henry Earle of Surrey, 4to. Lond. — — 1557
- The first seven Bookes of the *Eneidos*, by Phaer. Lond. 4to. B. L. — — 1558
- This Translation is in rhyme of fourteen syllables.*
- The nine first Bookes, &c. by Phaer, 4to. Lond. 1562
- The thirteene Bookes of *Encidos*, by Phaer and Twyne. 4to. Lond. — 1584, 1596, 1607, &c†.
- The first foure Bookes of Virgil's *Æneis*, translated into Engl. heroic Verse, by Richard Stanyhurst†, &c. 12mo. Lond. — — 1583
- The *Bucolickes* of Publius Virgilius Maro, &c. by Abraham Fleming, drawn into plaine and familiar Englyshe, Verse for Verse, 4to. B. L. — 1575
- Virgil's *Eclogues* and *Georgicks*, translated into blank Verse, by the same Author, Lond. — 1589
- The Lamentation of Corydon for the Love of Alexis, Verse for Verse, out of Latine.
- This is translated into English Hexameters, and printed at the end of the Countesse of Pembroke's Iuychurch, 1591. By Abraham Fraunce.*
- Virgil's *Culex* paraphrased, by Spenser. See his works.

H O R A C E.

- Two Bookes of Horace his *Satyres* Englyshed, accordyng to the Prescription of Saint Hierome, 4to. B. L. Lond. — — 1566
- Horace his *Arte of Poetrie*, *Pistles* || and *Satyrs* Englyshed, by Tho. Drant, 4to. Lond. — 1567

* This is a translation of the second and fourth books into blank verse, and is perhaps the oldest specimen of that metre in the English language.

† Among the entries in the books of the Stationers' company, is the following. "Tho. Creede.] Virgil's *Æneidos* in Englishe verse, 1595." Again, in 1600. Again his *Bucolics* and *Georgics* in the same year.

‡ The copy which I have seen, was in 4to, printed at Leiden, and was entered as such on the books of the Stationers' on the 24th of January, 1582.

|| There is an entry at Stationers' hall of the *Epistles* of Horace in 1591.

OVID.

OVID.

- The fifteene Bookes of Metamorphoseos. In which ben
contaynid the Fables of Ovid, by William Caxton,
Westm. fol. — — 1480
- Æ The four first Books of Ovid, transl. from the Latin into
English Meetre, by Arthur Golding, Gent. 4to.
B. L. Lond. — — 1565
- The fifteene Bookes of P. Ovidius Naso, &c. by Arthur
Golding, 4to. Bl. L. Lond. — — 1567
- D°. — — — 1576
- [*Another in 1575 according to Ames. A former Edition
was in 1572, in Rawlinson's catal.*]
- D°. — — — 1587. D°. 1612
- The pleasant Fable of Hermaphroditus and Salmacis.
8vo. Lond. — — 1565
- The Fable of Ovid treating of Narcissus, transl. out of
Latin into Eng. Mytre, with a Moral ther unto very
plesante to rede, 4to. Lond. — — 1590
- The Heroycall Epistles, &c. set out and translated by
Geo. Turbervile, Gent. &c. B. L. 4to. Lond *. 1567
1569, and 1600
- The three first Bookes of Ovid de Tristibus, transl. into
English, by Tho. Churchyard, 4to. Lond. 1580 †
- Ovid his Invective against Ibis, translated into Eng.
Meeter, &c. 12mo. Lond. — — 1569 ‡
- And, by Tho. Underwood. 1577
- Certaine of Ovid's Elegies by C. Marlow §. 12mo. At
Middleburgh. — — no date.
- All Ovid's Elegies, three Bookes. By C. M. At Middle-

* Among the Stationers' entries I find in 1594, "A booke entituled *Oenone and Paris*, wherein is described the extremity of love," &c. This may be a translation from Ovid.

† This book was entered at Stationers' hall by Tho. Easte, July 1, 1577, and by Thomas Orwin in 1591.

‡ Among the entries in the books of the Stationers' company is the following. Henry Bynneman] July 1, 1577, Ovid's Invective against Ibis. Bought of Tho. Easte.

§ In the forty-first of Q. Eliz. these translations from Ovid were commanded by the archbishop of Canterbury and the bishop of London, to be burnt at Stationers' hall.

burgh.

74 ANCIENT TRANSLATIONS.

burgh. 12mo. Somewhat larger than the preceding edition.

Æ Ovidius Naso, his Remedy of love, translated and entitled to the youth of England, 4to. 1600

Salmacis and Hermaphroditus, by Fra. Beaumont, 4to. 1602

He likewise translated a Part of the Remedy of Love. There was another Translation of the whole, by Sir Tho. Overbury, 8vo. without date.*

P L A U T U S.

Menæchmi, by W. W. Lond †. — 1595

M A R T I A L.

Flowers of Epigrams (from Martial particularly) by Tim. Kendall, 8vo †. — — 1577

T E R E N C E.

Terens in Englysh, or the translacon out of Latin into Englysh of the first comedy of Tyrens callyd Andria. *Supposed to be printed by J. Rustell §.*

Andria,

* On the books of the Stationers' company, Dec. 23, 1599, is entered, "Ovidius Naso his Remedy of Love." Again, in the same year, "Ovydes Epistles in Englishe," and "Ovydes Metamorphosis in Englyshe."

† This piece was entered at Stationers' hall June 10th 1594. In 1520, viz. the 11th year of Hen. VIII. it appears from Holinshed, that a comedy of Plautus was played before the king.

‡ Entered at Stationers' hall Feb. 1576.

§ As the following metrical introduction to this play, relates chiefly to the improvements at that time supposed to have been made in the English language, I could not prevail on myself to suppress it.

The Poet.

The famous renown through the worlde is sprong
Of poetys ornat that usyd to indyte
Of dyvers matters in theyr moder tong
Some toke upon them translacons to wryte
Some to compile bokys for theyr delyte
But in our Englysh tong for to speke playn
I rede but of few have take any gret payn.

Except

ANCIENT TRANSLATIONS. 75

Andria, the first Comedy of Terence, by Maurice Kyffin.

4to. — — — 1588

Terence in English, by Richard Bernard, 4to. Cambridge*. — — 1598

Except master Gowre which furst began
And of moralite wrote ryght craftely
Than master Chaucer that excellent man
Which wrote as compendious as elyantly
As in any other tong ever dyd any
Ludgate also which adournyd our tong
Whose noble famys through the world be sprong.

By these men our tong is amplyfyed so
That we therin now translate as well as may
As in eny other tongis other can do.
Yet the Greke tong and Laten dyvers men say
Have many wordys can not be Englyshid this day
So lyke wyse in Englysh many wordys do habound
That no Greke nor Laten for them can be found.

And the cause that our tong is so plenteouse now
For we kepe our Englysh contynually
And of other tongis many wordis we borow
Which now for Englysh we use and occupy
These thingis have gyven corage gretly
To dyvers and specyally now of late
To them that this comedy have translate.

Which all discrete men now do besech
And specyally lernyd men to take no dysdayn
Though this be compylyd in our vulgare spech
Yet lernyng thereby some men may attayn
For they that in this comedy have take payn
Pray you to correct where faut shal be found
And of our matter so here is the ground.

In the metrical peroration to this piece, is the following stanza :

Wherefore the translatours now require you this
Yf ought be amys ye wold consyder
The Englysh almost as short as the Latten is
And still to kepe ryme a dyfficult matter
To make the sentence opynly to appere
Which if it had a long expocysion
Then were it a comment and no translacyon.

* At Stationers' hall in 1597, " the second comedy of Terence, called *Eunuchus*" was entered by W. Leake; and the first and second comedie in 1600.

Flowers

76 ANCIENT TRANSLATIONS.

Flowers of Terence, — — 1591

S E N E C A.

Seneca his Tenne Tragedies *, translated into Englysh
by different Translators, 4to. Lond. 1581

Seneca's Forme and Rule of Honest Living, by Rob.
Whyttington, 8vo. — 1546

Seven Bookes of Benefyting†, by Arthur Golding, 4to.
1577

L U C A N.

Lucan's First Booke, translated line for line, by Chr.
Marlow, 4to. Lond. Printed by P. Short for Wal-
ter Burre. — — 1600

L I V Y.

Livius (Titus †) and other Authores Historie of Annibal
and Scippio, translated into English, by Anthony
Cope, Esquier, B. L. 4to. Lond. — 1545

The Romane Hist. &c. by T. Livius of Padua. Also the
Breviaries of L. Florus, &c. by D. Philemon Hol-
land, fol. Lond. — — 1600

T A C I T U S.

The End of Nero and Beginning of Galba. Fower
Bookes of the Histories of Cornelius Tacitus. The
Life of Agricola, by Sir Hen. Saville, 4to. Lond.
1591

Annales of Tacitus, by Richard Grenaway, fol. 1598

* In the first volume of the entries of the Stationers' company,
Aug. 1579, Rich. Jones, and John Charlewood entered the 4th tra-
gedie of Seneca. And again all the ten in 1581.

† In the first volume of the entries in the books of the Stationers'
company is the following, "March 26. 1579, *Seneca de Beneficiis* in
Englyshe."

‡ In the first volume of the entries in the books of the Stationers'
company, anno 1597, is the following note: "Memorandum that
Mr. Alexander Nevill, Gent. is appointed to translate *Titus Livius*
into the Englyshe tongue: expressed, the same is not to be printed, by
any man, but only such as shall have his translacon." Again, in
1598, "The history of Titus Livius" was entered by Adam Islip.

SALLUST.

S A L L U S T*.

The Famous Cronycle of the Warre, which the Romyns had against Jugurth, &c. compyled in Lat. by the renowned Romayn Sallust, &c. translated into Englishe, by Sir Alex. Barclay Preeft, &c. Printed by Pynson, fol.

D^o.

Lond. pr. by Joh. Waley, 4to. — 1557

The Conspiracie of Lucius Cataline, translated into Eng. by Tho. Paynell, 4to. Lond. 1541 and 1557

The two most Worthy and Notable Histories, &c. Both written by C. C. Sallustius, and translated by Tho. Heywood, Lond. fm. fol. — 1608

S U E T O N I U S.

Suetonius, translated by D. Phil. Holland, fol. Lond. 1606†

C Æ S A R†.

Cæsar's Commentaries, as touching British affairs. Without name, printer, place, or date; but by the type it appears to be Rastell's.

Ames, p. 148.

The eight Bookes of Caius Julius Cæsar, translated by Arthur Golding, Gent. 4to. Lond. 1565 and 1590

Cæsar's Commentaries (de Bello Gallico) five Bookes, by Clement Edmundes, with Observations, &c. Fol. 1600

De Bello Civili. by D^o. three Bookes. Fol. 1609

D^o. by Chapman. — — 1604

J U S T I N.

The Hist. of Justine, &c. by A. G. [Arthur Golding] Lond. 4to. — 1564 and 1578

D^o. by Dr. Phil. Holland — 1606

* A translation of Sallust was entered at Stationers' hall in 1588. Again, in 1607, "The historie of Sallust in Englishe."

† This translation was entered at Stationers' hall 1604.

‡ In the entries made in the books of the Stationers' company is the following,

"John Charelewood] Sept. 1581, Abstracte of the historie of Cæsar and Pompeius."

78 ANCIENT TRANSLATIONS.

D^o. by G. W. with an Epitomie of the Lives, &c. or
the Romaine Emperors, from Aurelius Victor, fol.
1606

Q. CURTIUS.

The Historie of Quintus Curtius, &c. translated, &c. by
John Brende, 4to. Lond. — — 1553
Others Editions were in 1561, 1584, 1570, 1592 *

EUTROPIUS.

Eutropius englished, by Nic. Haward, 8vo. 1564

A. MARCELLINUS.

Ammianus Marcellinus, translated by Dr. P. Holland.
Lond. fol. — — — 1609

CICERO.

Cicero's Familiar Epistles by J. Webbe, fm. 8vo. *no date*
Certain select Epistles into English, by Abra. Flemming,
4to. Lond. — — 1576

Those Fyve Questions which Marke Tullye Cicero dis-
puted in his Manor of Tusculanum, &c. &c. Eng-
lyshed by John Dolman, fm. 8vo. Lond. 1561

† Marcus Tullius Cicero, three Bookes of Duties, tourn-
ed out of Latin into English, by Nic. Grimalde
1555, 1556, 1558, 1574

Ames says 1553; perhaps by mistake.

The thre Bokes of Tullius Offyce, &c. translated, &c. by
R. Whyttington, Poet Laureat, 12mo. Lond. 1533,
1534, 1540, and 1553 †

* In the Stationers' books this or some other translation of the
same author was entered by Richard Tottell, Feb. 1582, and again
by Tho' Creede, &c. 1599.

† Mattaine says [Ann. Typog. B. 5. 290.] "In florulentâ tituli
margunculâ (vulgo vignette) superiore, inscribitur 1534." This was
a wooden Block used by the Printer Tortel, for many Books in small
8vo. and by no means determines their Date. There may however,
have been some earlier translation than any here enumerated, as in
Sir Tho. Elyot's *Boke named the Governour*, 1537, is mentioned "the
worke of Cicero, called in Latine *De Officiis*, whereunto yet is no
propre English worde," &c.

† In the books belonging to Stationers' hall, "Tullies Offices in
Latin and English" is entered Feb. 1582, for R. Tottell. Again, by
Tho. Orwin, 1591.

ANCIENT TRANSLATIONS. 79

The booke of Tulle of Old Age, translated by Will. Wyrcestre, alias Botaner. Caxton, 4to. 1481

De Senectute, by Whyttington, 8vo. no date

An Epistle or letter of exhortation written in Latyne by Marcus Tullius Cicero, to his brother Quintus, the Proconsul or Deputy of Asia, wherein the office of a magistrate is cunningly and wisely described; translated into Englyshe by G. G. set forth and authorised according to the Queenes Majesties Injunctions. Prynted at London by Rouland Hall dwelling in Golding Lane, at the sygne of the three arrows. small. 8vo. — — 1561

The worthie Booke of Old Age, otherwise intituled The elder Cato, &c. 12mo*. Lond. 1569

Tullius Cicero on Old Age, by Tho. Newton, 8vo*. Lond. — — 1569

Tullius Friendship, Olde Age, Paradoxe, and Scipio's Dream, by Tho. Newton, 4to. — 1577

Tullius de Amicitia, translated into our maternal Englyshe Tongue, by the E. of Worcester. Printed by Caxton, with the Translation of *De Senectute*, fol.

The Paradoxe of M. T. Cicero, &c. by Rob. Whyttington, Poet Laureat. Printed in Southwarke, 12mo. 1540

Webbe translated all the sixteen Books of Cicero's Epistles, but probably they were not printed together in Shakespeare's Life-time. I suppose this, from a Passage in his Dedication, in which he seems to mean Bacon, by a Great Lord Chancellor.

B O E T H I U S.

Boethius, by Chaucer. Printed by Caxton, fol.

Boethius in English Verse, by Tho. Rychard. Imprinted in the exempt Monastery of Tavistock, 4to. 1525
Eng. and Lat. by Geo. Colville, 4to. 1556†

** These are perhaps the same as the two foregoing Translations.

† In the Stationers' books Jan. 13th, 1608, Matthew Lownes entered "Anitius Manlius Torquatus Severinus Boethius, a Christian Consul of Rome, newly translated out of Latin, together with original notes explaining the obscurest places."

APULEIUS.

80 ANCIENT TRANSLATIONS.

A P U L E I U S.

Apuleius's Golden Assè, translated into Eng. by Wm. Adlington, 4to. Lond. — 1566 and 1571*

F R O N T I N U S.

Stratagemes, Sleightes, and Policies of Warre, gathered by S. Julius Frontinus. Translated by Richard Morisine, 8vo. Printed by Tho. Berthelet 1539

P L I N Y J U N r.

Some select Epistles of Pliny the Younger into Eng. by Abr. Flemming, 4to. Lond. — 1576

P O M P O N I U S M E L A.

Pomponius Mela, by A. Golding, 4to. — 1590

P L I N Y.

Pliny's Nat. Hist. by Dr. Phil. Holland, fol. 1601

S O L I N U S.

Julius Solinus Polyhistor, by A. Golding, 4to. 1587

V E G E T I U S

The four Bookes of Flavius Vegetius, concerning martial Policye, by John Sadler, 4to. 1572

R U T I L I U S R U F U S.

A View of Valiaunce, translated from Rutilius Rufus, by Tho. Newton, 8vo. — — 1580

D A R E S Phryg. and D I C T Y S Cret.

Dares and Dictys's Trojan War, in Verse 1555

* There is an entry of this translation in the books at Stationers' hall in 1595. Valentine Simes is the name of the printer who entered it. It is again entered by Clement Knight in 1600.

† On the books of the Stationers' company is this entry. "Adam Islip, 1600.] The xxxvii bookes of C. Plinius Secundus his historie of the worlde. To be translated out of Latin into Englyshe and so printed."

CATO, and P. SYRUS.

Caton*, translated into Englyshe by Mayster Benet Burgh, &c. mentioned by Caxton.

Cathon [Parvus and Magnús] transl. &c. by Caxton 1483†

Preceptes of Cato, with Annotations of Erasmus, &c. 24mo. Lond. — 1560 and 1562

† Catonis Disticha, Latin and English, small 8vo. Lond. 1553

Ames mentions a Discourse of Human Nature, translated from Hippocrates, p. 428; an Extract from Pliny, translated from the French, p. 312; Æsop †, &c. by Caxton and others; and there is no doubt, but many Translations at present unknown, may be gradually recovered, either by industry or accident.

* Probably this was never printed.

† There is an entry of *Caton* at Stationers' hall in 1591 by — Adams, Eng. and Lat. Again, in the year 1591 by Tho. Orwin. Again, in 1605, "Four bookes of morall sentences entituled Cato, translated out of Latin into English by J. M. Master of Arts."

‡ "Æsop's Fables in Englyshe" were entered May 7th 1590, on the books of the Stationers' company. Again, Oct. 1591, Again Æsop's Fables in Meter, Nov. 1598. Some few of them had been paraphrased by Lydgate, and I believe are still unpublished. See the Brit. Mus. MSS. Harl. 2251.

It is much to be lamented that *Andrew Maunsell*, a bookseller in Lothbury, who published two parts of a catalogue of English printed books. fol. 1595, did not proceed to his third collection. This, according to his own account of it, would have consisted of "Grammar, Logick, and Rhetoricke, Lawe, Historie, Poetrie, Policie," &c. which, as he tells us, "for the most part concerne matters of delight and pleasure."

M R. P O P E ' S

P R E F A C E.

IT is not my design to enter into a criticism upon this author; though to do it effectually, and not superficially, would be the best occasion that any just writer could take, to form the judgment and taste of our nation. For of all English poets Shakspeare must be confessed to be the fairest and fullest subject for criticism, and to afford the most numerous, as well as most conspicuous instances, both of beauties and faults of all sorts. But this far exceeds the bounds of a preface, the business of which is only to give an account of the fate of his works, and the disadvantages under which they have been transmitted to us. We shall hereby extenuate many faults which are his, and clear him from the imputation of many which are not: a design, which, though it can be no guide to future criticks to do him justice in one way, will at least be sufficient to prevent their doing him an injustice in the other.

I cannot however but mention some of his principal and characteristick excellencies, for which (notwithstanding his defects) he is justly and universally elevated above all other dramattick writers. Not that this is the proper place of praising him, but because I would not omit any occasion of doing it.

If ever any author deserved the name of an *original*, it was Shakspeare. Homer himself drew not his art so immediately from the fountains of nature, it proceeded through Ægyptian strainers and channels, and came to him not without some tincture of the learning, or some cast of the models, of those before him. The poetry of Shakspeare was inspiration indeed: he is not so much an imitator, as an instrument, of nature; and it is not so just to say that he speaks from her, as that she speaks through him.

His

His *characters* are so much nature herself, that it is a sort of injury to call them by so distant a name as copies of her. Those of other poets have a constant resemblance, which shews that they received them from one another, and were but multipliers of the same image: each picture, like a mock-rainbow, is but the reflexion of a reflexion. But every single character in Shakspeare is as much an individual, as those in life itself; it is as impossible to find any two alike; and such as from their relation or affinity in any respect appear most to be twins, will, upon comparison, be found remarkably distinct. To this life and variety of character, we must add the wonderful preservation of it; which is such throughout his plays, that had all the speeches been printed without the very names of the persons, I believe one might have applied them with certainty to every speaker.

The *power* over our *passions* was never possessed in a more eminent degree, or displayed in so different instances. Yet all along, there is seen no labour, no pains to raise them; no preparation to guide our guess to the effect, or be perceived to lead toward it: but the heart swells, and the tears burst out, just at the proper places: we are surpris'd the moment we weep; and yet upon reflexion find the passion so just, that we should be surpris'd if we had not wept, and wept at that very moment.

How astonishing is it again, that the passions directly opposite to these, laughter and spleen, are no less at his command! that he is not more a master of the *great* than of the *ridiculous* in human nature; of our noblest tenderesses, than of our vaineft foibles; of our strongest emotions, than of our idlest sensations!

Nor does he only excel in the passions: in the coolness of reflexion and reasoning he is full as admirable. His *sentiments* are not only in general the most pertinent and judicious upon every subject; but by a talent very peculiar, something between penetration and felicity, he hits upon that particular point on which the bent of each argument turns, or the force of each motive depends. This is perfectly amazing, from a man of no education

or experience in those great and publick scenes of life which are usually the subject of his thoughts: so that he seems to have known the world by intuition, to have looked through human nature at one glance, and to be the only author that gives ground for a very new opinion, that the philosopher, and even the man of the world, may be *born*, as well as the poet.

It must be owned, that with all these great excellencies, he has almost as great defects; and that as he has certainly written better, so he has perhaps written worse than any other. But I think I can in some measure account for these defects, from several causes and accidents; without which it is hard to imagine that so large and so enlightened a mind could ever have been susceptible of them. That all these contingencies should unite to his disadvantage seems to me almost as singularly unlucky, as that so many various (nay contrary) talents should meet in one man, was happy and extraordinary.

It must be allowed that stage-poetry, of all other, is more particularly levelled to please the *populace*, and its success more immediately depending upon the *common suffrage*. One cannot therefore wonder, if Shakspeare, having at his first appearance no other aim in his writings than to procure a subsistence, directed his endeavours solely to hit the taste and humour that then prevailed. The audience was generally composed of the meaner sort of people; and therefore the images of life were to be drawn from those of their own rank: accordingly we find, that not our author's only, but almost all the old comedies have their scene among *tradesmen* and *mechanicks*: and even their historical plays strictly follow the common *old stories* or *vulgar traditions* of that kind of people. In tragedy, nothing was so sure to *surprize* and cause *admiration*, as the most strange, unexpected, and consequently most unnatural, events and incidents; the most exaggerated thoughts; the most verbose and bombast expression; the most pompous rhymes, and thundering versification. In comedy, nothing was so sure to *please*, as mean buffoonry, vile ribaldry, and unmannerly

mannerly jests of fools and clowns. Yet even in these our author's wit buoys up, and is borne above his subject: his genius in those low parts is like some prince of a romance in the disguise of a shepherd or peasant; a certain greatness and spirit now and then break out, which manifest his higher extraction and qualities.

It may be added, that not only the common audience had no notion of the rules of writing, but few even of the better sort piqued themselves upon any great degree of knowledge or nicety that way; till Ben Jonson getting possession of the stage, brought critical learning into vogue: and that this was not done without difficulty, may appear from those frequent lessons (and indeed almost declamations) which he was forced to prefix to his first plays, and put into the mouth of his actors, the *grex*, *chorus*, &c. to remove the prejudices, and inform the judgment of his hearers. Till then, our authors had no thoughts of writing on the model of the ancients: their tragedies were only histories in dialogue; and their comedies followed the thread of any novel as they found it, no less implicitly than if it had been true history.

To judge therefore of Shakspeare by Aristotle's rules, is like trying a man by the laws of one country, who acted under those of another. He writ to the *people*; and writ at first without patronage from the better sort, and therefore without aims of pleasing them: without assistance or advice from the learned, as without the advantage of education or acquaintance among them: without that knowledge of the best models, the ancients, to inspire him with an emulation of them; in a word, without any views of reputation, and of what poets are pleased to call immortality: some or all of which have encouraged the vanity, or animated the ambition, of other writers.

Yet it must be observed, that when his performances had merited the protection of his prince, and when the encouragement of the court had succeeded to that of the town; the works of his riper years are manifestly raised above those of his former. The dates of his plays suffi-

ciently evidence that his productions improved, in proportion to the respect he had for his auditors. And I make no doubt this observation would be found true in every instance, were but editions extant from which we might learn the exact time when every piece was composed, and whether writ for the town, or the court.

Another cause (and no less strong than the former) may be deduced from our author's being a *player*, and forming himself first upon the judgments of that body of men whereof he was a member. They have ever had a standard to themselves, upon other principles than those of Aristotle. As they live by the majority, they know no rule but that of pleasing the present humour, and complying with the wit in fashion; a consideration which brings all their judgment to a short point. Players are just judges of what is *right*, as taylor's are of what is *graceful*. And in this view it will be but fair to allow, that most of our author's faults are less to be ascribed to his wrong judgment as a poet, than to his right judgment as a player.

By these men it was thought a praise to Shakspeare, that he scarce ever *blotted a line*. This they industriously propagated, as appears from what we are told by Ben Jonson in his *Discoveries*, and from the preface of Heminge and Condell to the first folio edition. But in reality (however it has prevailed) there never was a more groundless report, or to the contrary of which there are more undeniable evidences. As, the comedy of *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, which he entirely new writ; *The History of Henry the Sixth*, which was first published under the title of *The Contention of York and Lancaster*; and that of *Henry the Fifth*, extremely improved; that of *Hamlet* enlarged to almost as much again as at first, and many others. I believe the common opinion of his want of learning proceeded from no better ground. This too might be thought a praise by some, and to this his errors have as injudiciously been ascribed by others. For it is certain, were it true, it could concern but a small part of them; the most are such as are not properly defects, but superfoetations: and arise not from want of learning

learning or reading, but from want of thinking or judging: or rather (to be more just to our author) from a compliance to those wants in others. As to a wrong choice of the subject, a wrong conduct of the incidents, false thoughts, forced expressions, &c. if these are not to be ascribed to the foresaid accidental reasons, they must be charged upon the poet himself, and there is no help for it. But I think the two disadvantages which I have mentioned (to be obliged to please the lowest of the people, and to keep the worst of company) if the consideration be extended as far as it reasonably may, will appear sufficient to mislead and depress the greatest genius upon earth. Nay, the more modesty with which such a one is endued, the more he is in danger of submitting and conforming to others, against his own better judgment.

But as to his *want of learning*, it may be necessary to say something more: there is certainly a vast difference between *learning* and *languages*. How far he was ignorant of the latter, I cannot determine; but it is plain he had much reading at least, if they will not call it learning. Nor is it any great matter, if a man has knowledge, whether he has it from one language or from another. Nothing is more evident than that he had a taste of natural philosophy, mechanicks, ancient and modern history, poetical learning, and mythology: we find him very knowing in the customs, rites, and manners of antiquity. In *Coriolanus* and *Julius Cæsar*, not only the spirit, but manners, of the Romans are exactly drawn; and still a nicer distinction is shewn between the manners of the Romans in the time of the former, and of the latter. His reading in the ancient historians is no less conspicuous, in many references to particular passages: and the speeches copied from Plutarch in *Coriolanus** may, I think, as well be made an instance of his learning, as those copied from Cicero in *Catiline*, of Ben Jonson's. The manners of other nations in general, the Egyptians, Venetians, French, &c. are drawn with

* These, as the reader will find in the notes on that play, Shakspeare drew from Sir Thomas North's Translation, 1579. MALONE.

equal propriety. Whatever object of nature, or branch of science, he either speaks of or describes, it is always with competent, if not extensive knowledge: his descriptions are still exact; all his metaphors appropriated, and remarkably drawn from the true nature and inherent qualities of each subject. When he treats of ethick or politick, we may constantly observe a wonderful justness of distinction, as well as extent of comprehension. No one is more a master of the poetical story, or has more frequent allusions to the various parts of it: Mr. Waller (who has been celebrated for this last particular) has not shewn more learning this way than Shakspeare. We have translations from *Ovid* published in his name*, among those poems which pass for his, and for some of which we have undoubted authority (being published by himself, and dedicated to his noble patron the earl of Southampton): he appears also to have been conversant in *Plautus*, from whom he has taken the plot of one of his plays: he follows the Greek authors, and particularly Dares Phrygius, in another: (although I will not pretend to say in what language he read them). The modern Italian writers of *novels* he was manifestly acquainted with; and we may conclude him to be no less conversant with the ancients of his own country, from the use he has made of Chaucer in *Troilus and Cressida*, and in *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, if that play be his, as there goes a tradition it was (and indeed it has little resemblance of Fletcher, and more of our author than some of those which have been received as genuine).

I am inclined to think this opinion proceeded originally from the zeal of the partizans of our author and Ben Jonson; as they endeavoured to exalt the one at the expence of the other. It is ever the nature of parties to be in extremes; and nothing is so probable, as that because Ben Jonson had much the more learning, it was said on the one hand that Shakspeare had none at all; and because Shakspeare had much the most wit and

* They were written by Thomas Heywood. See Vol. X. p. 321, n. 1. MALONE.

fancy, it was retorted on the other, that Jonson wanted both. Because Shakspeare borrowed nothing, it was said that Ben Jonson borrowed every thing. Because Jonson did not write extempore, he was reproached with being a year about every piece; and because Shakspeare wrote with ease and rapidity, they cried, he never once made a blot. Nay, the spirit of opposition ran so high, that whatever those of the one side objected to the other, was taken at the rebound, and turned into praises; as injudiciously, as their antagonists before had made them objections.

Poets are always afraid of envy; but sure they have as much reason to be afraid of admiration. They are the Scylla and Charybdis of authors; those who escape one, often fall by the other. *Pessimus genus inimicorum laudantes*, says Tacitus; and Virgil desires to wear a charm against those who praise a poet without rule or reason.

—*si ultra placitum laudârit, baccare frontem*
Cingite, ne vati noceat—.

But however this contention might be carried on by the partizans on either side, I cannot help thinking these two great poets were good friends, and lived on amicable terms, and in offices of society with each other. It is an acknowledged fact, that Ben Jonson was introduced upon the stage, and his first works encouraged, by Shakspeare. And after his death, that author writes, *To the memory of his beloved William Shakspeare*, which shews as if the friendship had continued through life. I cannot for my own part find any thing *invidious* or *sparing* in those verses, but wonder Mr. Dryden was of that opinion. He exalts him not only above all his contemporaries, but above Chaucer and Spenser, whom he will not allow to be great enough to be ranked with him; and challenges the names of Sophocles, Euripides, and Æschylus, nay, all Greece and Rome at once, to equal him: and (which is very particular) expressly vindicates him from the imputation of wanting *art*, not enduring that all his excellencies should be attributed to *nature*. It is remarkable too, that the praise he gives him in his

his *Discoveries* seems to proceed from a *personal kindness*; he tells us, that he loved the man, as well as honoured his memory; celebrates the honesty, openness, and frankness of his temper; and only distinguishes, as he reasonably ought, between the real merit of the author, and the silly and derogatory applauses of the players. Ben Jonson might indeed be sparing in his commendations (though certainly he is not so in this instance) partly from his own nature, and partly from judgment. For men of judgment think they do any man more service in praising him justly, than lavishly. I say, I would fain believe they were friends, though the violence and ill-breeding of their followers and flatterers were enough to give rise to the contrary report. I hope that it may be with *parties*, both in wit and state, as with those monsters described by the poets; and that their *heads* at least may have something human, though their *bodies* and *tails* are wild beasts and serpents.

As I believe that what I have mentioned gave rise to the opinion of Shakspeare's want of learning; so what has continued it down to us may have been the many blunders and illiteracies of the first publishers of his works. In these editions their ignorance shines in almost every page; nothing is more common than *Actus tertia*. *Exit omnes*. *Enter three Witches solus* *. Their French is as bad as their Latin, both in construction and spelling: their very Welsh is false. Nothing is more likely than that those palpable blunders of Hector's quoting Aristotle, with others of that gross kind, sprung from the same root: it not being at all credible that these could be the errors of any man who had the least tincture of a school, or the least conversation with such as had. Ben Jonson (whom they will not think partial to him) allows him at least to have had *some* Latin; which is utterly inconsistent with mistakes like these. Nay, the constant blunders in proper names of persons and places,

* *Enter three witebes solus*.] This blunder appears to be of Mr. Pope's own invention. It is not to be found in any one of the four folio copies of Macbeth, and there is no quarto edition of it extant.

are such as must have proceeded from a man, who had not so much as read any history in any language: so could not be Shakspeare's.

I shall now lay before the reader some of those almost innumerable errors, which have risen from one source, the ignorance of the players, both as his actors, and as his editors. When the nature and kinds of these are enumerated and considered, I dare to say that not Shakspeare only, but Aristotle or Cicero, had their works undergone the same fate, might have appeared to want sense as well as learning.

It is not certain that any one of his plays was published by himself. During the time of his employment in the theatre, several of his pieces were printed separately in quarto. What makes me think that most of these were not published by him, is the excessive carelessness of the press: every page is so scandalously false spelled, and almost all the learned or unusual words so intolerably mangled, that it is plain there either was no corrector to the press at all, or one totally illiterate. If any were supervised by himself, I should fancy *The Two Parts of Henry the Fourth*, and *Midsummer-Night's Dream* might have been so: because I find no other printed with any exactness; and (contrary to the rest) there is very little variation in all the subsequent editions of them. There are extant two prefaces to the first quarto edition of *Troilus and Cressida* in 1609, and to that of *Othello*; by which it appears, that the first was published without his knowledge or consent, and even before it was acted, so late as seven or eight years before he died: and that the latter was not printed till after his death. The whole number of genuine plays, which we have been able to find printed in his life-time, amounts but to eleven. And of some of these, we meet with two or more editions by different printers, each of which has whole heaps of trash different from the other: which I should fancy was occasioned by their being taken from different copies belonging to different play-houses.

The folio edition (in which all the plays we now receive as his were first collected) was published by two

players, Heminge and Condell, in 1623, seven years after his decease. They declare, that all the other editions were stolen and surreptitious, and affirm theirs to be purged from the errors of the former. This is true as to the literal errors, and no other; for in all respects else it is far worse than the quartos.

First, because the additions of trifling and bombast passages are in this edition far more numerous. For whatever had been added, since those quartos, by the actors, or had stolen from their mouths into the written parts, were from thence conveyed into the printed text, and all stand charged upon the author. He himself complained of this usage in *Hamlet*, where he wishes that *those who play the clowns would speak no more than is set down for them.* (Act III. sc. iv.) But as a proof that he could not escape it, in the old editions of *Romeo and Juliet* there is no hint of a great number of the mean conceits and ribaldries now to be found there. In others, the low scenes of mobs, plebeians, and clowns, are vastly shorter than at present: and I have seen one in particular (which seems to have belonged to the play-house, by having the parts divided with lines, and the actors names in the margin) where several of those very passages were added in a written hand, which are since to be found in the folio.

In the next place, a number of beautiful passages, which are extant in the first single editions, are omitted in this: as it seems, without any other reason, than their willingness to shorten some scenes: these men (as it was said of Procrustes) either lopping, or stretching an author, to make him just fit for their stage.

This edition is said to be printed from the *original copies*; I believe they meant those which had lain ever since the author's days in the play-house, and had from time to time been cut, or added to, arbitrarily. It appears that this edition, as well as the quartos, was printed (at least partly) from no better copies than the *prompter's book*, or *piece-meal parts* written out for the use of the actors: for in some places their
very

very * names are through carelessness set down instead of the *Personæ Dramatis*; and in others the notes of direction to the *property-men* for their *moveables*, and to the *players* for their *entries*, are inserted into the text † through the ignorance of the transcribers.

The plays not having been before so much as distinguished by *Acts* and *Scenes*, they are in this edition divided according as they played them; often when there is no pause in the action, or where they thought fit to make a breach in it, for the sake of musick, masques, or monsters.

Sometimes the scenes are transposed and shuffled backward and forward; a thing which could no otherwise happen, but by their being taken from separate and piece-meal written parts.

Many verses are omitted entirely, and others transposed; from whence invincible obscurities have arisen, past the guess of any commentator to clear up, but just where the accidental glimpse of an old edition enlightens us.

Some characters were confounded and mixed, or two put into one, for want of a competent number of actors. Thus in the quarto edition of *Midsummer-Night's Dream*, Act V. Shakspeare introduces a kind of master of the revels called *Philostrate*; all whose part is given to another character (that of *Egeus*) in the subsequent editions: so also in *Hamlet* and *King Lear*. This too makes it probable that the prompter's books were what they called the original copies.

* *Much Ado about Nothing*, Act II. Enter Prince Leonato, Claudio, and Jack Wilson, instead of *Balthasar*. And in Act IV. *Cowley* and *Kemp* constantly through a whole scene.

Edit. fol. of 1623, and 1632. POPE.

† Such as,

"My queen is murder'd! Ring the little bell."

"— His nose grew as sharp as a pen, and a table of green fields;" which last words are not in the quarto. POPE.

There is no such line in any play of Shakspeare, as that quoted above by Mr. Pope. MALONE.

From

From liberties of this kind, many speeches also were put into the mouths of wrong persons, where the author now seems chargeable with making them speak out of character: or sometimes perhaps for no better reason, than that a governing player, to have the mouthing of some favourite speech himself, would snatch it from the unworthy lips of an underling.

Prose from verse they did not know, and they accordingly printed one for the other throughout the volume.

Having been forced to say so much of the players, I think I ought in justice to remark, that the judgment, as well as condition of that class of people was then far inferior to what it is in our days. As then the best play-houses were inns and taverns, (the Globe, the Hope, the Red Bull, the Fortune, &c.) so the top of the profession were then mere players, not gentlemen of the stage: they were led into the buttery by the steward*, not placed at the lord's table, or lady's toilette: and consequently were entirely deprived of those advantages they now enjoy in the familiar conversation of our nobility, and an intimacy (not to say dearneſs) with people of the first condition.

From what has been said, there can be no question but had Shakspeare published his works himself (especially in his latter time, and after his retreat from the stage) we should not only be certain which are genuine, but should find in those that are, the errors lessened by some thousands. If I may judge from all the distinguishing marks of his stile, and his manner of thinking and writing, I make no doubt to declare that those wretched

* Mr. Pope probably recollected the following lines in the *Taming of the Shrew*, spoken by a Lord, who is giving directions to his servant concerning some players:

“ Go, firrah, take them to the buttery,

“ And give them friendly welcome, every one.”

But he seems not to have observed that the players here introduced were *strollers*; and there is no reason to suppose that our authour, Heminge, Burbage, Lowin, &c. who were licensed by K. James, were treated in this manner. MALONE.

plays, *Pericles*, *Lochrine*, *Sir John Oldcastle*, *Yorkshire Tragedy*, *Lord Cromwell*, *The Puritan*, *London Prodigal*, and a thing called *The Double Falshood*, cannot be admitted as his. And I should conjecture of some of the others, (particularly *Love's Labour's Lost*, *The Winter's Tale*, *Comedy of Errors*, and *Titus Andronicus*,) that only some characters, single scenes, or perhaps a few particular passages, were of his hand. It is very probable what occasioned some plays to be supposed Shakspeare's, was only this; that they were pieces produced by unknown authors, or fitted up for the theatre while it was under his administration; and no owner claiming them, they were adjudged to him, as they give strays to the lord of the manor: a mistake which (one may also observe) it was not for the interest of the house to remove. Yet the players themselves, Heminge and Condell, afterwards did Shakspeare the justice to reject those eight plays in their edition; though they were then printed in his name*, in every body's hands, and acted with some applause (as we learned from what Ben Jonson says of *Pericles* in his ode on the *New Inn*). That *Titus Andronicus* is one of this class I am the rather induced to believe, by finding the same author openly express his contempt of it in the *Induction* to *Bartholomew-Fair*, in the year 1614, when Shakspeare was yet living. And there is no better authority for these latter sort, than for the former, which were equally published in his life-time.

If we give into this opinion, how many low and vicious parts and passages might no longer reflect upon this great genius, but appear unworthily charged upon him? And even in those which are really his, how many faults may have been unjustly laid to his account from arbitrary additions, expunctions, transpositions of scenes and lines, confusion of characters and persons, wrong application of speeches, corruptions of innumerable passages by the ignorance, and wrong corrections of them again by the impertinence, of his first editors? From one or other of

* His name was affixed only to four of them. MALONE.

these considerations, I am verily persuaded, that the greatest and the grossest part of what are thought his errors would vanish, and leave his character in a light very different from that disadvantageous one, in which it now appears to us.

This is the state in which Shakspeare's writings lie at present; for since the above-mentioned folio edition, all the rest have implicitly followed it, without having recourse to any of the former, or ever making the comparison between them. It is impossible to repair the injuries already done him; too much time has elapsed, and the materials are too few. In what I have done I have rather given a proof of my willingness and desire, than of my ability, to do him justice. I have discharged the dull duty of an editor, to my best judgment, with more labour than I expect thanks, with a religious abhorrence of all innovation, and without any indulgence to my private sense or conjecture. The method taken in this edition will shew itself. The various readings are fairly put in the margin, so that every one may compare them; and those I have preferred into the text are constantly *ex fide codicum*, upon authority. The alterations or additions, which Shakspeare himself made, are taken notice of as they occur. Some suspected passages, which are excessively bad (and which seem interpolations by being so inserted, that one can entirely omit them without any chasm, or deficiency in the context) are degraded to the bottom of the page; with an asterisk referring to the places of their insertion. The scenes are marked so distinctly, that every removal of place is specified; which is more necessary in this author than any other, since he shifts them more frequently; and sometimes, without attending to this particular, the reader would have met with obscurities. The more obsolete or unusual words are explained. Some of the most shining passages are distinguished by commas in the margin; and where the beauty lay not in particulars, but in the whole, a star is prefixed to the scene. This seems to me a shorter and less ostentatious method of performing the better half of criticism (namely, the pointing out
an

an author's excellencies) than to fill a whole paper with citations of fine passages, with *general applauses*, or *empty exclamations* at the tail of them. There is also subjoined a catalogue of those first editions, by which the greater part of the various readings and of the corrected passages are authorized; most of which are such as carry their own evidence along with them. These editions now hold the place of originals, and are the only materials left to repair the deficiencies or restore the corrupted sense of the author: I can only wish that a greater number of them (if a greater were ever published) may yet be found, by a search more successful than mine, for the better accomplishment of this end.

I will conclude by saying of Shakspeare, that with all his faults, and with all the irregularity of his *drama*, one may look upon his works, in comparison of those that are more finished and regular, as upon an ancient majestick piece of *Gothick* architecture, compared with a neat modern building: the latter is more elegant and glaring, but the former is more strong and more solemn. It must be allowed that in one of these there are materials enough to make many of the other. It has much the greater variety, and much the nobler apartments; though we are often conducted to them by dark, odd, and uncouth passages. Nor does the whole fail to strike us with greater reverence, though many of the parts are childish, ill-placed, and unequal to its grandeur.

THE
DEDICATION OF THE PLAYERS.

TO THE
MOST NOBLE AND INCOMPARABLE PAIRE
OF BRETHREN,

W I L L I A M

Earle of PEMBROKE, &c. Lord Chamberlaine to the
Kings most Excellent Majestie;

A N D

P H I L I P

Earle of MONTGOMERY, &c. Gentleman of his Majesties
Red-chamber.

Both Knights of the Most Noble Order of the Garter,
and our singular good LORDS.

RIGHT HONOURABLE,

WHILST we studie to be thankfull in our particular, for the many favors we have received from your L. L. we are false upon the ill fortune, to mingle two the most diverse things that can be, feare, and rashnesse; rashnesse in the enterprize, and feare of the successe. For, when we value the places your H. H. sustaine, wee cannot but know the dignity greater, than to descend to the reading of these trifles: and, while we name them trifles, we have deprived ourselves of the defence of our dedication. But since your L. L. have been pleased to thinke these trifles something, heeretofore; and have prosecuted both them, and their authour living, with so much favour; we hope that (they out-living him, and he not having the fate, common with some, to be exequutor to his owne writings) you will use the same indulgence toward them, you have done unto their parent. There is a great difference, whether any booke choose his patrones, or finde them: this hath done both.
For,

For, so much were your L. L. likings of the severall parts, when they were acted, as before they were published, the volume asked to be yours. We have but collected them, and done an office to the dead, to procure his orphans, guardians; without ambition either of selfe-profit, or fame: onely to keepe the memory of so worthy a friend, and fellow alive, as was our SHAKSPEARE, by humble offer of his playes, to your most noble patronage. Wherein, as we have justly observed no man to come neere your L. L. but with a kind of religious addresse, it hath bin the height of our care, who are the presenters, to make the present worthy of your H. H. by the perfection. But, there we must also crave our abilities to be considered, my Lords. We cannot goe beyond our owne powers. Country hands reach forth milke, creame, fruits, or what they have: and many nations (we have heard) that had not gummes and incense, obtained their requests with a leavened cake*. It was no fault to approach their gods by what meanes they could: and the most, though meanest, of things are made more precious, when they are dedicated to temples. In that name therefore, we most humbly consecrate to your H. H. these remaines of your servant SHAKSPEARE; that what delight is in them may be ever your L. L. the reputation his, and the faults ours, if any be committed, by a paire so carefull to shew their gratitude both to the living, and the dead, as is

Your Lordshippes most bounden,

JOHN HEMINGE,
HENRY CONDELL.

* *Country hands reach forth milke, &c. and many nations—that had not gummes and incense, obtained their requests with a leavened cake.*]

This seems to have been one of the common-places of dedication in Shakspeare's age. We find it in Morley's Dedication of a Book of Songs to Sir Robert Cecil, 1595: "I have presumed" (says he) "to make offer of these simple compositions of mine, imitating (right honourable) in this the customs of the old world, who wanting *incense* to offer up to their gods, made shift instead thereof to honour them with *milk*." The same thought (if I recollect right) is again employed by the players in their dedication of Fletcher's plays, folio, 1647.

MALONE.

THE

THE
P R E F A C E
OF THE
P L A Y E R S.

TO THE GREAT VARIETY OF READERS

FROM the most able, to him that can but spell: there you are numbered, we had rather you were weighed. Especially, when the fate of all bookes depends upon your capacities: and not of your heads alone, but of your purses. Well! it is now publike, and you will stand for your priviledges, wee know: to read, and censure. Doe so, but buy it first. That doth best commend a booke, the stationer saies. Then, how odde soever your braines be, or your wisedomes, make your licence the same, and spare not. Judge your fixe-pen'orth, your shillings worth, your five shillings worth at a time, or higher, so you rise to the just rates, and welcome. But, whatever you doe, buy. Censure will not drive a trade, or make the jacke goe. And though you be a magistrate of wit, and sit on the stage at Black-friars, or the Cock-pit, to arraigne plays dailie, know, these playes have had their triall already, and stood out all appeales; and do now come forth quitted rather by a decree of court, than any purchased letters of commendation.

It had bene a thing, we confesse, worthie to have been wished, that the author himselfe had lived to have set forth, and overseen his owne writings; but since it hath been ordained otherwise, and he by death departed from that right, we pray you doe not envie his friends the office of their care and paine, to have collected and published them; and so to have published them, as where* (before) you were abused with divers stolne and surreptitious copies, maimed and deformed by the frauds and stealthes of injurious impostors, that exposed them, even

* —as where—] i. e. whereas. MALONE.

those are now offered to your view cured, and perfect of their limbes ; and all the rest, absolute in their numbers as he conceived them : who, as he was a happy imitator of nature, was a most gentle expresse of it. His mind and hand went together ; and what he thought, he uttered with that easinesse, that wee have scarce received from him a blot in his papers. But it is not our province, who onely gather his workes, and give them you, to praise him. It is yours that reade him. And there we hope, to your divers capacities, you will finde enough, both to draw, and hold you : for his wit can no more lie hid, then it could be lost. Reade him, therefore ; and againe, and againe : and if then you doe not like him, surely you are in some manifest danger, not to understand him. And so we leave you to other of his friends, who, if you need, can bee your guides : if you neede them not, you can leade yourselves, and others. And such readers we wish him.

JOHN HEMINGE,
HENRIE CONDELL.

S O M E
ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE, &c.
O F
WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE.

WRITTEN BY MR. ROWE.

IT seems to be a kind of respect due to the memory of excellent men, especially of those whom their wit and learning have made famous, to deliver some account of themselves, as well as their works, to posterity. For this reason, how fond do we see some people of discovering any little personal story of the great men of antiquity! their families, the common accidents of their lives, and even their shape, make, and features, have been the subject of critical inquiries. How trifling soever this curiosity may seem to be, it is certainly very natural; and we are hardly satisfied with an account of any remarkable person, till we have heard him described even to the very cloaths he wears. As for what relates to men of letters, the knowledge of an author may sometimes conduce to the better understanding his book; and though the works of Mr. Shakspeare may seem to many not to want a comment, yet I fancy some little account of the man himself may not be thought improper to go along with them.

He was the son of Mr. John Shakspeare, and was born at Stratford-upon-Avon, in Warwickshire, in April 1564. His family, as appears by the register and publick writings relating to that town, were of good figure and fashion there, and are mentioned as gentlemen. His father, who was a considerable dealer in wool¹, had so large a family, ten children in all, that though he was his

¹ *His father, who was a considerable dealer in wool,—*] It appears that he had been officer and bailiff of Stratford-upon-Avon; and that he enjoyed some hereditary lands and tenements, the reward of his grandfather's faithful and approved services to King Henry VII. See the Extract from the Herald's Office. THEOBALD.

The

his eldest son, he could give him no better education than his own employment. He had bred him, it is true,

The chief magistrate of the Body Corporate of Stratford, now distinguished by the title of Mayor, was in the early charters called the High Bailiff. This office Mr. John Shakspeare filled in 1569, as appears from the following extracts from the books of the corporation, with which I have been favoured by the Rev. Mr. Davenport, Vicar of Stratford-upon-Avon.

"Jan. 10, in the 6th year of the reign of our sovereign lady Queen Elizabeth, John Shakspeare passed his Chamberlain's accounts.

"At the Hall holden the eleventh day of September, in the eleventh year of the reign of our sovereign lady Elizabeth, 1569, were present Mr. John Shakspeare, High Bailiff." [Then follow the names of the Aldermen and Burgessees.]

"At the Hall holden Nov. 19th, in the 21st year of the reign of our sovereign lady Queen Elizabeth, it is ordained, that every Alderman shall be taxed to pay weekly 4d. saving *John Shakspeare* and Robert Bruce, who shall not be taxed to pay any thing; and every burgesse to pay 2d."

"At the Hall holden on the 6th day of September, in the 28th year of our sovereign lady Queen Elizabeth.

"At this hall William Smith and Richard Courte are chosen to be Aldermen in the places of John Wheler, and John Shakspeare, for that Mr. Wheler doth desire to be put out of the company, and Mr. Shakspeare doth not come to the halls, when they be warned, nor hath not done of long time."

From these extracts it may be collected, (as is observed by the gentleman above-mentioned, to whose obliging attention to my inquiries I am indebted for many particulars relative to our poet's family,) that Mr. John Shakspeare in the former part of his life was in good circumstances, such persons being generally chosen into the corporation; and from his being excused [in 1579] to pay 4d. weekly, and at a subsequent period (1586) put out of the corporation, that he was then reduced in his circumstances.

It appears from a note to W. Dethick's Grant of Arms to him in 1596, now in the College of Arms, *Vincent*, Vol. 157, p. 24, that he was a justice of the peace, and possessed of lands and tenements to the amount of 500l.

Our poet's mother was the daughter and heir of Robert Arden of Wellincote, in the county of Warwick, who, in the Ms. above referred to, is called "a gentleman of worship." The family of *Arden* is a very ancient one; Robert Arden of Bromwich, esq. being in the list of the gentry of this county, returned by the commissioners in the twelfth year of King Henry VI. A.D. 1433. Edward Arden was Sheriff of the county in 1568.—The woodland part of this county was anciently called *Arden*; afterwards softened to *Arden*. Hence the name. MALONE.

for some time at a free-school², where, it is probable, he acquired what Latin he was master of: but the narrowness of his circumstances, and the want of his assistance at home, forced his father to withdraw him from thence, and unhappily prevented his further proficiency in that language. It is without controversy, that in his works we scarce find any traces of any thing that looks like an imitation of the ancients. The delicacy of his taste, and the natural bent of his own great genius, (equal, if not superior, to some of the best of theirs,) would certainly have led him to read and study them with so much pleasure, that some of their fine images would naturally have insinuated themselves into, and been mixed with his own writings; so that his not copying at least something from them, may be an argument of his never having read them. Whether his ignorance of the ancients were a disadvantage to him or no, may admit of a dispute: for though the knowledge of them might have made him more correct, yet it is not improbable but that the regularity and deference for them, which would have attended that correctness, might have restrained some of that fire, impetuosity, and even beautiful extravagance, which we admire in Shakspeare: and I believe we are better pleased with those thoughts, altogether new and uncommon, which his own imagination supplied him so abundantly with, than if he had given us the most beautiful passages out of the Greek and Latin poets, and that in the most agreeable manner that it was possible for a master of the English language to deliver them.

Upon his leaving school, he seems to have given entirely into that way of living which his father proposed to him^{*}; and in order to settle in the world after a family manner, he thought fit to marry while he was yet very young³. His wife was the daughter of one Hathaway,

² *He had bred him, it is true, at a free-school,]* The free-school, I presume, founded at Stratford. THEOBALD.

^{*} *— into that way of living which his father proposed to him;]* I believe, that on leaving school Shakspeare was placed in the office of some country attorney, or the seneschal of some manor court. See the *Essay on the order of his plays*, Article, *Hamlet*. MALONE.

³ *— he thought fit to marry while he was yet very young.]* It is certain

way⁴, said to have been a substantial yeoman in the neighbourhood of Stratford. In this kind of settlement he continued for some time, till an extravagance that he was guilty of forced him both out of his country, and that way of living which he had taken up; and though it seemed at first to be a blemish upon his good manners, and a misfortune to him, yet it afterwards happily proved the occasion of exerting one of the greatest *geniuses* that ever was known in dramatick poetry. He had by a misfortune common enough to young fellows, fallen into ill company; and amongst them, some that made a frequent practice of deer-stealing, engaged him more than once in robbing a park that belonged to Sir Thomas Lucy, of Charlecote, near Stratford. For this he was prosecuted by that gentleman, as he thought, somewhat too severely; and in order to revenge that ill usage, he made a ballad upon him⁵. And though this, probably the

tain he did so; for by the monument in Stratford church erected to the memory of his daughter, Susanna, the wife of John Hall, gentleman, it appears, that she died on the 2d of July, 1649, aged 66: so that she was born in 1583, when her father could not be full 19 years old. THEOBALD.

Susanna, who was our poet's eldest child, was baptized, May 26, 1583. Shakspeare therefore, having been born in April 1564, was nineteen the month preceding her birth. Mr. Theobald was mistaken in supposing that a monument was erected to her in the church of Stratford. There is no memorial there in honour of either our poet's wife or daughter, except flat tomb-stones, by which, however, the time of their respective deaths is ascertained.—His daughter, Susanna, died, not on the *second*, but the *eleventh* of July, 1649. Theobald was led into this error by Dugdale. MALONE.

4 *His wife was the daughter of one Hathaway,*] She was eight years older than her husband, and died in 1623, at the age of 67 years.

THEOBALD.

The following is the inscription on her tomb-stone in the church of Stratford :

"Here lyeth interred the body of ANNE, wife of William Shakspeare, who departed this life the 6th day of August, 1623, being of the age of 67 years."

After this inscription follow six Latin verses, not worth preserving. MALONE.

5 — *in order to revenge that ill usage, he made a ballad upon him.*] Mr. William Oldys, (Norroy King at Arms, and well known from the share he had in compiling the *Biographia Britannica*) among the collections which he left for a *Life of Shakspeare*, observes, that —"there

the first essay of his poetry, be lost, yet it is said to have been so very bitter, that it redoubled the prosecution
against

—"there was a very aged gentleman living in the neighbourhood of Stratford, (where he died fifty years since) who had not only heard, from several old people in that town, of Shakspeare's transgression, but could remember the first stanza of that bitter ballad, which, repeating to one of his acquaintance, he preserved it in writing; and here it is neither better nor worse, but faithfully transcribed from the copy which his relation very courteously communicated to me."

"A parliemente member, a justice of peace,

"At home a poor scare-crowe, at London an asse,

"If lowsie is Lucy, as some volke miscale it,

"Then Lucy is lowsie whatever befall it :

"He thinks himself greate,

"Yet an asse in his state

"We allowe by his ears but with asses to mate.

"If Lucy is lowsie, as some volke miscale it,

"Sing lowsie Lucy, whatever befall it."

Contemptible as this performance must now appear, at the time when it was written it might have had sufficient power to irritate a vain, weak, and vindictive magistrate; especially as it was affixed to several of his park-gates, and consequently published among his neighbours.—It may be remarked likewise, that the jingle on which it turns, occurs in the first scene of the *Merry Wives of Windsor*.

I may add, that the veracity of the late Mr. Oldys has never yet been impeached; and it is not very probable that a ballad should be forged, from which an undiscovered wag could derive no triumph from antiquarian credulity. STEEVENS.

According to Mr. Capell, this ballad came originally from Mr. Thomas Jones, who lived at Tarbick, a village in Worcestershire, about 18 miles from Stratford-upon-Avon, and died in 1703, aged upwards of ninety. "He remembered to have heard from several old people at Stratford the story of Shakspeare's robbing Sir Thomas Lucy's park; and their account of it agreed with Mr. Rowe's, with this addition, that the ballad written against Sir Thomas Lucy by Shakspeare was stuck upon his park-gate, which exasperated the knight to apply to a lawyer at Warwick to proceed against him. Mr. Jones (it is added) put down in writing the first stanza of this ballad, which was all he remembered of it." In a note on the transcript with which Mr. Capell was furnished, it is said, that "the people of those parts pronounce *lowsie* like Lucy." They do so at this day in Scotland. Mr. Wilkes, grandson of the gentleman to whom Mr. Jones repeated the stanza, appears to have been the person who gave a copy of it to Mr. Oldys, and Mr. Capell.

In a Manuscript *History of the Stage*, full of forgeries and falsehoods of various kinds, written (I suspect by William Chetwood the prompter)

against him to that degree, that he was obliged to leave his business and family in Warwickshire, for some time, and shelter himself in London.

It is at this time, and upon this accident, that he is said to have made his first acquaintance in the playhouse. He was received into the company then in being, at first in a very mean rank⁶; but his admirable wit, and the natural turn of it to the stage, soon distinguished him, if not as an extraordinary actor, yet as an excellent writer. His name is printed, as the custom was in those times, amongst those of the other players, before some old plays, but without any particular account of what sort of parts he used to play; and though I have inquired, I could never meet with any further account of him this way, than that the top of his performance was the Ghost in his own *Hamlet*⁷. I should have been much more pleased,

ter) some time between April 1727 and October 1730, is the following passage, to which the reader will give just as much credit as he thinks fit:

"Here we shall observe, that the learned Mr. Joshua Barnes, late Greek Professor of the University of Cambridge, baiting about forty years ago at an inn in Stratford, and hearing an old woman sing part of the above-said song, such was his respect for Mr. Shakspeare's genius, that he gave her a new gown for the two following stanzas in it; and, could she have said it all, he would (as he often said in company, when any discourse has casually arose about him) have given her ten guineas:

"Sir Thomas was too covetous,

"To covet so much deer,

"When horns enough upon his head

"Most plainly did appear.

"Had not his worship one deer left?

"What then! He had a wife

"Took pains enough to find him horns

"Should last him during life." MALONE.

⁶ *He was received into the company—at first in a very mean rank;]* There is a stage tradition, that his first office in the theatre was that of *Call-boy*, or prompter's attendant; whose employment it is to give the performers notice to be ready to enter, as often as the business of the play requires their appearance on the stage. MALONE.

⁷ *—than that the top of his performance was the Ghost in his own Hamlet.]* See such notices as I have been able to collect on this subject, in the List of old English actors, *post*. MALONE.

guished merit in the wars in France in Henry the Fifth's and Henry the Sixth's times. What grace soever the queen conferred upon him, it was not to her only he owed the fortune which the reputation of his wit made. He had the honour to meet with many great and uncommon marks of favour and friendship from the earl of Southampton², famous in the histories of that time for his friendship to the unfortunate earl of Essex. It was to that noble lord that he dedicated his poem of *Venus and Adonis**. There is one instance so singular in the magnificence of this patron of Shakspeare's, that if I had not been assured that the story was handed down by Sir William D'Avenant, who was probably very well acquainted with his affairs, I should not have ventured to have inserted; that my lord Southampton at one time gave him a thousand pounds, to enable him to go through with a purchase which he heard he had a mind to. A bounty very great, and very rare at any time, and almost equal to that profuse generosity the present age has shewn to French dancers and Italian singers.

What particular habitude or friendships he contracted with private men, I have not been able to learn, more than that every one, who had a true taste of merit, and could distinguish men, had generally a just value and esteem for him. His exceeding candour and good-nature must certainly have inclined all the gentler part of the world to love him, as the power of his wit obliged the men of the most delicate knowledge and polite learning to admire him.

His acquaintance with Ben Jonson began with a remarkable piece of humanity and good-nature; Mr. Jonson, who was at that time altogether unknown to the world, had offered one of his plays to the players, in order to have it acted; and the persons into whose hands

² — from the earl of Southampton,] Of this amiable nobleman such memoirs as I have been able to collect, may be found in the tenth volume, prefixed to the poem of *Venus and Adonis*. MALONE.

* — be dedicated his poem of *Venus and Adonis*.] To this nobleman also he dedicated his *Rape of Lucrece*, printed in quarto in 1594.

it was put, after having turned it carelessly and superciliously over, were just upon returning it to him with an ill-natured answer, that it would be of no service to their company; when Shakspeare luckily cast his eye upon it, and found something so well in it, as to engage him first to read it through, and afterwards to recommend Mr. Jonson and his writings to the publick³. Jonson was certainly

³ — to recommend Mr. Jonson and his writings to the publick.] In Mr. Rowe's first edition, after these words was inserted the following passage:

"After this, they were professed friends; though I do not know whether the other ever made him an equal return of gentleness and sincerity. Ben was naturally proud and insolent, and in the days of his reputation did so far take upon him the supremacy in wit, that he could not but look with an evil eye upon any one that seemed to stand in competition with him. And if at times he has affected to commend him, it has always been with some reserve; insinuating his uncorrectness, a careless manner of writing, and want of judgment. The praise of seldom altering or blotting out what he writ, which was given him by the players, who were the first publishers of his works after his death, was what Jonson could not bear: he thought it impossible, perhaps, for another man to strike out the greatest thoughts in the finest expression, and to reach those excellencies of poetry with the ease of a first imagination, which himself with infinite labour and study could but hardly attain to."

I have preserved this passage because I believe it strictly true, except that in the last line, instead of *but hardly*, I would read—*never*.

Dryden, we are told by Pope, concurred with Mr. Rowe in thinking Jonson's posthumous verses on our author *sparing* and *invidious*.—See also Mr. Steevens's note on those verses.

Before Shakspeare's death Ben's envious disposition is mentioned by one of his own friends; it must therefore have been even then notorious, though the writer denies the truth of the charge:

"To my well accomplish'd friend, Mr. Ben. Jonson.

"Thou art sound in body; but some say, thy soule

"*Envy doth ulcer*; yet corrupted hearts

"Such censurers must have."

Scourge of Folly, by J. Davies, printed about 1611.

The following lines by one of Jonson's admirers will sufficiently support Mr. Rowe in what he has said relative to the slowness of that writer in his compositions:

"Soorn then their censures who gave out, thy wit

"As long upon a comedy did sit

"As elephants bring forth, and that thy blots

"And mendings took more time than FORTUNE-PLOTS;

"That

112 SOME ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE, &c.

tainly a very good scholar, and in that had the advantage of Shakspeare; though at the same time I believe it must be

“ That such thy drought was, and so great thy thirst,
 “ That all thy plays were drawn at the *Mermaid* first;
 “ That the king’s yearly butt wrote, and his wine
 “ Hath more right than thou to thy *Catiline*.”

The writer does not deny the charge, but vindicates his friend by saying that, however slow,

“ He that writes well, writes quick.—”

Verses on B. Jonson, by Jasper Mayne.

So also another of his Panegyrists:

“ Admit his muse was slow, ’tis judgment’s fate
 “ To move like greatest princes, still in state.”

In *The Return from Parnassus*, 1606, Jonson is said to be “so slow an enditer, that he were better betake himself to his old trade of brick-laying.” The same piece furnishes us with the earliest intimation of the quarrel between him and Shakspeare. “Why here’s our fellow Shakspeare put them [the university poets] all down, ay, and Ben Jonson too. O, that Ben Jonson is a pestilent fellow; he brought up Horace giving the poets a pill, but our fellow Shakspeare hath given him a purge that made him bewray his credit.” Fuller, who was a diligent inquirer, and lived near enough the time to be well informed, confirms this account, asserting in his *Worthies*, 1662, that “many were the wit-combats” between Jonson and our poet.

It is a singular circumstance that old Ben should for near two centuries have stalked on the stilts of an artificial reputation; and that even at this day, of the very few who read his works, scarcely one in ten yet ventures to confess how little entertainment they afford. Such was the impression made on the publick by the extravagant praises of those who knew more of books than of the drama, that Dryden in his *Essay on Dramatick Poesie*, written about 1667, does not venture to go further in his elogium on Shakspeare, than by saying, “he was at least *Jonson’s equal*, if not his superior;” and in the preface to his *Mock Astrologer* 1671, he hardly dares to assert, what, in my opinion, cannot be denied, that “all Jonson’s pieces, except three or four, are but *crambe bis cocta*; the same humours a little varied and written worse.”

Ben however did not trust to the praises of others. One of his admirers honestly confesses,

“ ————— he
 “ Of whom I write this, has prevented me,
 “ And boldly said so much in his own praise,
 “ No other pen need any trophy raise.”

In vain, however, did he endeavour to bully the town into approbation by telling his auditors, “By G— ’tis good, and if you like’t, you may;” and by pouring out against those who preferred our poet to him,

be allowed, that what nature gave the latter, was more than a balance for what books had given the former; and the judgment of a great man upon this occasion was, I think, very just and proper. In a conversation between Sir John Suckling, Sir William D'Avenant, Endymion Porter, Mr. Hales of Eton, and Ben Jonson, Sir John Suckling, who was a professed admirer of Shakspeare,

him, a torrent of illiberal abuse; which, as Mr. Walpole justly observes, some of his contemporaries were willing to think wit, because they were afraid of it: for, notwithstanding all his arrogant boasts, notwithstanding all the clamour of his partizans both in his own life-time and for sixty years after his death, the truth is, that his pieces, when first performed, were so far from being applauded by the people, that they were scarcely endured; and many of them, were actually *damned*.

“ — the fine plush and velvets of the age

“ Did oft for sixpence *damn thee* from the stage,” —

says one of his eulogists in *Jonsonius Virbius*, 4to. 1638. Jonson himself owns that *Sejanus* was damned. “It is a poem,” says he, in his dedication to lord Aubigny, “that, if I well remember, in your lordship’s sight suffered no less violence from our people here, than the subject of it did from the rage of the people of Rome.” His friend E. B. (probably Edmund Bolton,) speaking of the same performance, says,

“ But when I view’d the people’s beastly rage,

“ Bent to confound thy grave and leat’ried toil,

“ That cost thee so much sweat and so much oil,

“ My indignation I could hardly assuage.”

Again, in his dedication of *Catiline* to the earl of Pembroke, the authour says, “Posterity may pay your benefit the honour and thanks, when it shall know that you dare in these jig-given times to countenance a legitimate poem. I must call it so, *against all noise of opinion*, from whose crude and ayrie reports I appeal to that great and singular facultie of judgment in your lordship.”

See also the Epilogue to *Every man in his humour*, by lord Buckhurst, quoted below in *the Account of our old English Theatres, ad finem*. To his testimony and that of Mr. Drummond of Hawthornden, (there also mentioned,) may be added that of Leonard Digges in his Verses on Shakspeare, and of Sir Robert Howard, who says in the preface to his Plays, folio, 1665, (not thirty years after Ben’s death,) “When I consider how severe the former age has been to some of the *best* of Mr. Jonson’s never-to-be-equall’d comedies, I cannot but wonder, why any poet should speak of former times.” The truth is, that however extravagant the elogiums were that a few scholars gave him in their closets, he was not only not admired in his own time by the generality, but not even understood. His friend Beaumont assures him in a copy of verses, that “his sense is so deep that he will not be understood for three ages to come.” MALONE.

114 SOME ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE, &c.

had undertaken his defence against Ben Jonson with some warmth; Mr. Hales, who had sat still for some time, told them⁴, *That if Mr. Shakspeare had not read the ancients, he had likewise not stolen any thing from them; and that if he would produce any one topick finely treated by any one of them, he would undertake to shew something upon the same subject at least as well written by Shakspeare*⁵.

The
4 Mr. Hales, who had sat still for some time, told them,] In Mr. Rowe's first edition this passage runs thus:

"Mr. Hales, who had sat still for some time, bearing Ben frequently reproach him with the want of learning and ignorance of the antients, told him at last, That if Mr. Shakspeare," &c. By the alteration, the subsequent part of the sentence—"if he would produce," &c. is rendered ungrammatical. MALONE.

⁵ — *he would undertake to shew something upon the same subject at least as well written by Shakspeare.*] I had long endeavoured in vain to find out on what authority this relation was founded; and have very lately discovered that Mr. Rowe probably derived his information from Dryden; for in Gildon's *Letters and Essays*, published in 1694, fifteen years before this Life appeared, the same story is told; and Dryden, to whom an Essay in vindication of Shakspeare is addressed, is appealed to by the writer as his authority. As Gildon tells the story with some slight variations from the account given by Mr. Rowe, and the book in which it is found is now extremely scarce, I shall subjoin the passage in his own words:

"But to give the world some satisfaction that Shakspeare has had as great veneration paid his excellence by men of unquestioned parts, as this I now express for him, I shall give some account of what I have heard from your mouth, sir, about the noble triumph he gained over all the ancients, by the judgment of the ablest critics of that time.

"The matter of fact, if my memory fail me not, was this. Mr. Hales of Eton affirmed, that he would shew all the poets of antiquity out-done by Shakspeare, in all the topicks and common-places made use of in poetry. The enemies of Shakspeare would by no means yield him so much excellence; so that it came to a resolution of a trial of skill upon that subject. The place agreed on for the dispute was Mr. Hales's chamber at Eton. A great many books were sent down by the enemies of this poet; and on the appointed day my lord Falkland, Sir John Suckling, and all the persons of quality that had wit and learning, and interested themselves in the quarrel, met there; and upon a thorough disquisition of the point, the judges chosen by agreement out of this learned and ingenious assembly, unanimously gave the preference to Shakspeare, and the Greek and Roman poets were adjudged to vail at least their glory in that, to the English Hero."

This elogium on our authour is likewise recorded at an earlier period by Tate, probably from the same authority, in the preface to the

Loyal

The latter part of his life was spent, as all men of good sense will wish theirs may be, in ease, retirement, and the conversation of his friends. He had the good fortune to gather an estate equal to his occasion⁵, and, in

Loyal General, quarto, 1680: "Our learned Hales was wont to assert, that, since the time of Orpheus, and the oldest poets, no common-place has been touched upon, where our author has not performed as well."

Dryden himself also certainly alludes to this story, which he appears to have related both to Gildon and Rowe, in the following passage of his *Essay of Dramatick Poesy*, 1667; and he as well as Gildon goes somewhat further than Rowe in his panegyrick. After giving that fine character of our poet which Dr. Johnson has quoted in his preface, he adds, "The consideration of this made Mr. Hales of Eton say, *that there was no subject of which any poet ever writ, but he would produce it MUCH BETTER done by Shakspeare*; and however others are now generally preferred before him, yet the age wherein he lived, which had contemporaries with him, Fletcher and Jonson, never equalled them to him in their esteem: And in the last king's court [that of Charles I.] when Ben's reputation was at highest, Sir John Suckling, and with him the greater part of the courtiers set our Shakspeare far above him."

Let ever-memorable Hales, if all his other merits be forgotten, be ever mentioned with honour, for his good taste and admiration of our poet. "He was," says Lord Clarendon, "one of the least men in the kingdom; and one of the greatest scholars in Europe." See a long character of him in Clarendon's *Life*, Vol. I. p. 52. MALONE.

⁵ *He had the good fortune to gather an estate equal to his occasion,*] Gildon, without authority, I believe, says, that our authour left behind him an estate of 300l. per ann. This was equal to at least 1000l. per ann. at this day; the relative value of money, the mode of living in that age, the luxury and taxes of the present time, and various other circumstances, being considered. But I doubt whether all his property amounted to much more than 200l. per ann. which yet was a considerable fortune in those times. He appears from his grand-daughter's will to have possessed in Bishopton, and Stratford Welcombe, four yard land and a half. *A yard land* is a denomination well known in Warwickshire, and contains from 30 to 60 acres. The average therefore being 45, four yard land and a half may be estimated at about two hundred acres. As sixteen years purchase was the common rate at which land was sold at that time, that is, one half less than at this day, we may suppose that these lands were let at seven shillings per acre, and produced 70l. per annum. If we rate the *Nervus-Place* with the appurtenances, and our poet's other houses in Stratford, at 60l. a year, and his house &c. in the Blackfriars, (for which he pay'd 140l.) at 20l. a year, we have a rent-roll of 150l. per annum. Of his personal property it is not now possible to form any accurate esti-

116 SOME ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE, &c.

in that, to his wish ; and is said to have spent some years before his death at his native Stratford⁶. His pleasurable

mate : but if we rate it at five hundred pounds, money then bearing an interest of ten per cent, Shakspeare's total income was 200l. per ann. In *the Merry Wives of Windsor*, which was written soon after the year 1600, *Three hundred pounds a year* is described as an estate of such magnitude as to cover all the defects of its possessor :

“ O, what a world of vile ill-favour'd faults

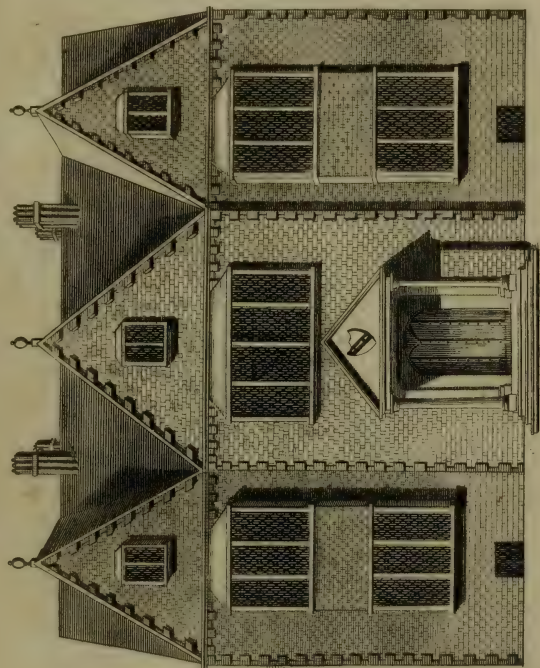
“ Look handsome in three hundred pounds a year !” MALONE.

⁶ — *to have spent some years before his death at his native Stratford.*]

In 1614 the greater part of the town of Stratford was consumed by fire ; but our Shakspeare's house, among some others, escaped the flames. This house was first built by Sir Hugh Clopton, a younger brother of an antient family in that neighbourhood. Sir Hugh was Sheriff of London in the reign of Richard III. and Lord-Mayor in the reign of King Henry VII. By his will he bequeathed to his elder brother's son his manor of Clopton, &c. and his house, by the name of the Great House in Stratford. Good part of the estate is yet [in 1733] in the possession of Edward Clopton, esq. and Sir Hugh Clopton, Knt. lineally descended from the elder brother of the first Sir Hugh.

The estate had now been sold out of the Clopton family for above a century, at the time when Shakspeare became the purchaser : who having repaired and modelled it to his own mind, changed the name to *New-Place*, which the mansion-house since erected upon the same spot, at this day retains. The house, and lands which attended it, continued in Shakspeare's descendants to the time of the Restoration ; when they were re-purchased by the Clopton family, and the mansion now belongs to Sir Hugh Clopton, Knt. To the favour of this worthy gentleman I owe the knowledge of one particular in honour of our poet's once dwelling-house, of which I presume Mr. Rowe never was apprized. When the Civil War raged in England, and King Charles the First's Queen was driven by the necessity of her affairs to make a recess in Warwickshire, she kept her court for three weeks in *New-Place*. We may reasonably suppose it then the best private house in the town ; and her Majesty preferred it to the College, which was in the possession of the Combe family, who did not so strongly favour the king's party. THEOBALD.

From Mr. Theobald's words the reader may be led to suppose that Henrietta Maria was obliged to take refuge from the rebels in Stratford-upon-Avon : but that was not the case. She marched from Newark, June 16, 1643, and entered Stratford-upon-Avon triumphantly, about the 22d of the same month, at the head of three thousand foot and fifteen hundred horse, with 150 waggons and a train of artillery. Here she was met by Prince Rupert, accompanied by a large body of troops. After sojourning about three weeks at our poet's house, which was then possessed by his grand-daughter Mrs. Nash, and her husband, the Queen went (July 13) to the plain of Keinton under



L. Jordan del.

A. Birrell sc.

NEW PLACE,

From a Drawing in the Margin of an Ancient SURVEY, made by Order of SIR GEORGE CAREW, (afterwards BARON CAREW of Clifton, and EARL of TOTNESS) and found at Clifton near Stratford upon Avon, in 1786.

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able wit and good-nature engaged him in the acquaintance, and entitled him to the friendship, of the gentlemen of

under Edge-hill, to meet the king, and proceeded from thence with him to Oxford, where says a contemporary historian, "her coming (July 15) was rather to a triumph than a war."

Of the college above-mentioned the following was the origin. John de Stratford, Bishop of Winchester, in the fifth year of King Edward III. founded a Chantry consisting of five priests, one of whom was Warden, in a certain chapel adjoining to the church of Stratford on the south side; and afterwards (in the seventh year of Henry VIII.) Ralph Collingwode instituted four choristers, to be daily assistant in the celebration of divine service there. This chantry, says Dugdale, soon after its foundation, was known by the name of *The College of Stratford-upon-Avon*.

In the 26th year of Edward III. "a house of square stone" was built by Ralph de Stratford, bishop of London, for the habitation of the five priests. This house, or another on the same spot, is the house of which Mr. Theobald speaks. It still bears the name of "The College," and at present belongs to the Rev. Mr. Fullerton.

After the suppression of religious houses, the site of the college was granted by Edward VI. to John earl of Warwick and his heirs; who being attainted in the 1st year of Queen Mary, it reverted to the crown.

Sir John Clopton, knight, (the father of Edward Clopton, esq. and Sir Hugh Clopton,) who died at Stratford-upon-Avon in April 1719, purchased the estate of New-Place, &c. some time after the year 1685, from Sir Reginald Forster, Baronet, who married Mary, the daughter of Edward Nash, esq. cousin-german to Thomas Nash, esq. who married our poet's grand-daughter, Elizabeth Hall. Edward Nash bought it, after the death of her second husband, Sir John Barnard, knight. By her will, which will be found in a subsequent page, she directed her trustee, Henry Smith, to sell the New-Place, &c. (after the death of her husband,) and to make the first offer of it to her cousin Edward Nash, who purchased it accordingly. His son Thomas Nash, whom for the sake of distinction I shall call the younger, having died without issue, in August 1652, Edward Nash by his will, made on the 16th of March, 1678-9, devised the principal part of his property to his daughter Mary, and her husband Reginald Forster, esq. afterwards Sir Reginald Forster; but in consequence of the testator's only referring to a deed of settlement executed three days before, without reciting the substance of it, no particular mention of New-Place is made in his will. After Sir John Clopton had bought it from Sir Reginald Forster, he gave it by deed to his younger son, Sir Hugh, who pulled down our poet's house, and built one more elegant on the same spot.

In May 1742, when Mr. Garrick, Mr. Macklin, and Mr. Delane, visited Stratford, they were hospitably entertained under Shakspeare's mulberry-tree, by Sir Hugh Clopton. He was a barrister at law, was

118 SOME ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE, &c.

of the neighbourhood. Amongst them, it is a story almost still remembered in that country that he had a particular

knighted by George the First, and died in the 80th year of his age, in Dec. 1751. His nephew Edward Clopton, the son of his elder brother Edward, lived till June 1753.

The only remaining person of the Clopton family now living (1788), as I am informed by the Rev. Mr. Davenport, is Mrs. Partheriche, daughter and heiress of the second Edward Clopton above-mentioned. "She resides," he adds, "at the family mansion at Clopton near Stratford, is now a widow, and never had any issue."

The New-Place was sold by Henry Talbot, esq. son-in-law and executor of Sir Hugh Clopton, in or soon after the year 1752, to the Rev. Mr. Gastrell, a man of large fortune, who resided in it but a few years; in consequence of a disagreement with the inhabitants of Stratford. Every house in that town that is let or valued at more than 40s. a year, is assessed by the Overseers, according to its worth and the ability of the occupier, to pay a monthly rate toward the maintenance of the poor. As Mr. Gastrell resided part of the year at Lichfield, he thought he was assessed too highly; but being very properly compelled by the magistrates of Stratford to pay the whole of what was levied on him, on the principle that his house was occupied by his servants in his absence, he peevishly declared, that *that* house should never be assessed again; and soon afterwards pulled it down, sold the materials, and left the town. Wishing, as it should seem, to be "damn'd to everlasting fame," he had some time before cut down Shakspeare's celebrated mulberry-tree, to save himself the trouble of shewing it to those whose admiration of our great poet led them to visit the poetick ground on which it stood.

That Shakspeare planted this tree, is as well authenticated as any thing of that nature can be. The Rev. Mr. Davenport informs me, that Mr. Hugh Taylor, (the father of his clerk,) who is now eighty-five years old, and an alderman of Warwick, where he at present resides, says, he lived when a boy at the next house to *New-Place*; that his family had inhabited the house for almost three hundred years; that it was transmitted from father to son during the last and the present century, that this tree (of the fruit of which he had often eaten in his younger days, some of its branches hanging over his father's garden,) was planted by Shakspeare; and that till this was planted, there was no mulberry-tree in that neighbourhood. Mr. Taylor adds, that he was frequently, when a boy, at *New-Place*, and that this tradition was preserved in the Clopton family, as well as in his own.

There were scarce any trees of this species in England till the year 1609, when by order of King James many hundred thousand young mulberry-trees were imported from France, and sent into the different counties, with a view to the feeding of silkworms, and the encouragement of the silk manufacture. See *Camdeni Annales ab anno 1603*

ticular intimacy with Mr. Combe⁷, an old gentleman noted thereabouts for his wealth and usury: it happened, that in a pleasant conversation amongst their common friends, Mr. Combe told Shakspeare in a laughing man-

ad annum 1623, published by Smith, quarto, 1691, p. 7; and Howes's *Abridgment of Stowe's Chronicle*, edit. 1618, p. 503, where we have a more particular account of this transaction than in the larger work. A very few mulberry-trees had been planted before; for we are told, that in the preceeding year a gentleman of Picardy, Monsieur Forest, "kept greate store of English silkworms at Greenwich, the which the king with great pleasure came often to see them worke; and of their silke he caused a *piece of taffata* to be made."

Shakspeare was perhaps the only inhabitant of Stratford, whose business called him annually to London; and probably on his return from thence in the spring of the year 1609, he planted this tree.

As a similar enthusiasm to that which with such diligence has sought after Virgil's tomb, may lead my countrymen to visit the spot where our great bard spent several years of his life, and died; it may gratify them to be told that the ground on which *The New-Place* once stood, is now a Garden belonging to Mr. Charles Hunt, an eminent attorney, and town-clerk of Stratford. Every Englishman will, I am sure, concur with me in wishing that it may enjoy perpetual verdure and fertility.

In this retreat our SHAKSPEARE's godlike mind
With matchless skill survey'd all human kind.
Here may each sweet that blest Arabia knows,
Flowers of all hue, and without thorn the rose,
To latest time, their balmy odours fling,
And Nature here display eternal spring! MALONE.

⁷ — *that he had a particular intimacy with Mr. Combe,*] This Mr. John Combe I take to be the same, who by Dugdale, in his *Antiquities of Warwickshire*, is said to have died in the year 1614, and for whom at the upper end of the quire of the guild of the holy cross at Stratford, a fair monument is erected, having a statue thereon cut in alabaster, and in a gown, with this epitaph. "Here lyeth interred the body of John Combe, Esq. who departing this life the 10th day of July, 1614, bequeathed by his last will and testament these sums ensuing, annually to be paid for ever; viz. xx.s. for two sermons to be preach'd in this church, and vi.l. iii.s. i.vd. to buy ten gowns for ten poore people within the borough of Stratford; and 100l. to be lent to fifteen poore tradesmen of the same borough, from three years to three years, changing the parties every third year, at the rate of fifty shillings per annum, the which increase he appointed to be distributed towards the relief of the almes-poor there." The donation has all the air of a rich and sagacious usurer, THEOBALD.

ner, that he fancied he intended to write his epitaph, if he happened to out-live him; and since he could not know what might be said of him when he was dead, he desired it might be done immediately; upon which Shakspeare gave him these four verses:

Ten in the hundred *lies here ingrav'd*³;
 'Tis a hundred to ten his soul is not sav'd:
 If any man ask, Who lies in this tomb?
 Oh! ho! quoth the devil, 'tis my John-a-Combe⁹.

³ *Ten in the hundred lies here ingrav'd*;] In *The more the merrier*, containing three-score and odd heedless epigrams, shot, (like the fool's bolts) among you, light where they will: By H. P. Gent. &c. 1608. I find the following couplet, which is almost the same as the two beginning lines of this *Epitaph on John a Combe*:

FENERATORIS EPITAPHIUM.

"Ten in the hundred lies under this stone,
 "And a hundred to ten to the devil he's gone."

STEEVENS.

So, in *Camden's Remains*, 1614:

"Here lyes ten in the hundred,
 "In the ground fast ramm'd;
 "'Tis an hundred to ten
 "But his soule is damn'd." MALONE.

⁹ *Oh! ho! quoth the devil, 'tis my John-a-Combe.*] The Rev. Francis Peck, in his *Memoirs of the Life and Poetical Works of Mr. John Milton*, 4to. 1740, p. 223, has introduced another epitaph imputed (on what authority is unknown) to Shakspeare. It is on *Tom-a-Combe*, alias *Thin-beard*, brother to this *John*, who is mentioned by Mr. Rowe.

"Thin in beard, and thick in purse;
 "Never man beloved worse;
 "He went to the grave with many a curse;
 "The devil and he had both one nurse." STEEVENS.

I suspect that these lines were sent to Mr. Peck by some person that meant to impose upon him. It appears from Mr. John Combe's will, that his brother Thomas was dead in 1614. John devised the greater part of his real and personal estate to his nephew Thomas Combe, with whom Shakspeare was certainly on good terms, having bequeathed him his sword.

Since I wrote the above, I find from the Register of Stratford, that Mr. Thomas Combe (the brother of John) was buried there, Jan. 22, 1609-10. MALONE.

But

But the sharpness of the satire is said to have stung the man so severely, that he never forgave it¹.

He

¹ — *the sharpness of the satire is said to have stung the man so severely, that he never forgave it.*] I take this opportunity to avow my disbelief that Shakspeare was the author of Mr. Combe's Epitaph, or that it was written by any other person at the request of that gentleman. If Betterton the player did really visit Warwickshire for the sake of collecting anecdotes relative to our author, perhaps he was too easily satisfied with such as fell in his way, without making any rigid search into their authenticity. It appears also from a following copy of this inscription, that it was not ascribed to Shakspeare so early as two years after his death. Mr. Reed of Staple-Inn obligingly pointed it out to me in the *Remains*, &c. of Richard Brathwaite, 1618; and as his edition of our epitaph varies in some measure from the latter one published by Mr. Rowe, I shall not hesitate to transcribe it:

"Upon one *John Combe* of *Stratford upon Avon*, a notable Usurer, fastened upon a Tombe that he had caused to be built in his Life-Time.

"Ten in the hundred must lie in his grave,

"But a hundred to ten whether God will him have:

"Who then must be interr'd in this tombe?

"Oh (quoth the divill) my *John a Combe*."

Here it may be observed that, strictly speaking, this is no jocular epitaph, but a malevolent prediction; and Brathwaite's copy is surely more to be depended on (being procured in or before the year 1618) than that delivered to Betterton or Rowe, almost a century afterwards. It has been already remarked, that two of the lines said to have been produced on this occasion, were printed as an epigram in 1608, by H. P. Gent. and are likewise found in Camden's *Remains*, 1614. I may add, that a usurer's solicitude to know what would be reported of him when he was dead, is not a very probable circumstance; neither was Shakspeare of a disposition to compose an invective, at once so bitter and uncharitable, during a *pleasant conversation among the common friends* of himself and a gentleman, with whose family he lived in such friendship, that at his death he bequeathed his sword to Mr. Thomas Combe as a legacy. A miser's monument indeed, constructed during his life-time, might be regarded as a challenge to satire; and we cannot wonder that anonymous lampoons should have been affixed to the marble designed to convey the character of such a being to posterity.—I hope I may be excused for this attempt to vindicate Shakspeare from the imputation of having poisoned the hour of confidence and festivity, by producing the severest of all censures on one of his company. I am unwilling, in short, to think he could so wantonly and so publicly have expressed his doubts concerning the salvation of one of his fellow-creatures. STEEVENS.

Since the above observations first appeared, (in a note to the edition of our authour's Poems which I published in 1780,) I have obtained

an additional proof of what has been advanced, in vindication of Shakspeare on this subject. It occurred to me that the will of John Combe might possibly throw some light on this matter, and an examination of it some years ago furnished me with such evidence as renders the story recorded in Brathwaite's *Remains* very doubtful; and still more strongly proves that, whoever was the authour of this epitaph, it is highly improbable that it should have been written by Shakspeare.

The very first direction given by Mr. Combe in his Will is, concerning a tomb to be erected to him *after his death*. "My will is, that a convenient tomb of the value of threescore pounds shall by my executors hereafter named, out of my goods and chattels first rayfed, within one year after my decease, be set over me." So much for Brathwaite's account of his having erected his own tomb in his lifetime. That he had any quarrel with our authour, or that Shakspeare had by any act *stung him so severely that Mr. Combe never forgave him*, appears equally void of foundation; for by his will he bequeaths "to Mr. William Shakspeare Five Pounds." It is probable that they lived in intimacy, and that Mr. Combe had made some purchase from our poet; for he devises to his brother George, "the close or grounds known by the name of Parson's Close, *alias, Shakspeare's Close*." It must be owned that Mr. Combe's will is dated Jan. 28, 1612-13, about eighteen months before his death; and therefore the evidence now produced is not absolutely decisive, as he might have erected a tomb, and a rupture might have happened between him and Shakspeare, after the making of this will: but it is very improbable that any such rupture should have taken place; for if the supposed cause of offence had happened subsequently to the execution of the instrument, it is to be presumed that he would have revoked the legacy to Shakspeare: and the same argument may be urged with respect to the direction concerning his tomb.

Mr. Combe by his will bequeaths to Mr. Francis Collins the elder, of the borough of Warwick, (who appears as a legatee and subscribing witness to Shakspeare's will, and therefore may be presumed a common friend,) ten pounds; to his godson John Collins, (the son of Francis,) ten pounds; to Mrs. Susanna Collins (probably godmother to our poet's eldest daughter) six pounds, thirteen shillings, and four-pence; to Mr. Henry Walker, (father to Shakspeare's godson,) twenty shillings; to the poor of Stratford twenty pounds; and to his servants, in various legacies, one hundred and ten pounds. He was buried at Stratford, July 12, 1614, and his will was proved, Nov. 10, 1615.

Our author, at the time of making *his* will, had it not in his power to shew any testimony of his regard for Mr. Combe, that gentleman being then dead; but that he continued a friendly correspondence with his family to the last, appears evidently (as Mr. Steevens has observed) from his leaving his sword to Mr. Thomas Combe, the nephew, residuary legatee, and one of the executors of John.

On the whole we may conclude, that the lines preserved by Rowe, and inserted with some variation in Brathwaite's *Remains*, which the latter has mentioned to have been affixed to Mr. Combe's tomb in his life-time, were not written till after Shakspeare's death; for the executors,

He died in the 53^d year of his age², and was buried on the north side of the chancel, in the great church at Stratford,

cutors, who did not prove the will till Nov. 1615, could not well have erected "a fair monument" of considerable expence for those times, till the middle or perhaps the end of the year 1616, in the April of which year our poet died. Between that time and the year 1618, when Braithwaite's book appeared, some one of those persons (we may presume) who had suffered by Mr. Combe's severity, gave vent to his feelings in the satirical composition preserved by Rowe; part of which, we have seen, was borrowed from epitaphs that had already been printed.—That Mr. Combe was a money-lender, may be inferred from a clause in his will, in which he mentions his "good and just debtors;" to every one of whom he remits "twenty shillings for every twenty pounds, and so after this rate for a greater or lesser debt," on their paying in to his executors what they owe.

Mr. Combe married Mrs. Rose Clopton, August 27, 1560; and therefore was probably, when he died, eighty years old. His property, from the description of it, appears to have been considerable.

In justice to this gentleman it should be remembered, that in the language of Shakspeare's age an *usurer* did not mean one who took exorbitant, but any, interest or usance for money; which many then considered as criminal. The opprobrious term by which such a person was distinguished, *Ten in the hundred*, proves this; for *ten per cent.* was the ordinary interest of money. See Shakspeare's will.—Sir Philip Sidney directs by his will, made in 1586, that Sir Francis Walsingham shall put four thousand pounds which the testator bequeathed to his daughter, "to the best behoofe either by purchase of land or lease, or some other *good and godly* use, but in no case to let it out for any *usury* at all." MALONE.

² *He died in the 53^d year of his age,*] He died on his birth-day, April 23, 1616, and had exactly completed his fifty-second year. From Du Cange's Perpetual Almanack, Gloss. in v. *Annus*, (making allowance for the different style which then prevailed in England from that on which Du Cange's calculation was formed,) it appears, that the 23^d of April in that year was a Tuesday.

No account has been transmitted to us of the malady which at so early a period of life deprived England of its brightest ornament. The private note-book of his son-in-law Dr. Hall, containing a short state of the cases of his patients, was a few years ago put into my hands by my friend, the late Dr. Wright; and as Dr. Hall married our poet's daughter in the year 1607, and undoubtedly attended Shakspeare in his last illness, being then forty years old, I had hopes this book might have enabled me to gratify the publick curiosity on this subject. But unluckily the earliest case recorded by Hall, is dated in 1617. He had probably filled some other book with memorandums of his practice in preceeding years; which by some contingency may hereafter be found, and inform posterity of the particular circumstances

124 SOME ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE, &c.

Stratford, where a monument, is placed in the wall³.
On his grave-stone underneath is⁴,

*Good friend, for Jesus' sake forbear
To dig the dust inclosed here.
Blest be the man that spares these stones,
And curst be he that moves my bones⁵.*

He

stances that attended the death of our great poet.—From the 34th page of this book, which contains an account of a disorder under which his daughter Elizabeth laboured, (about the year 1624,) and of the method of cure, it appears, that she was his only daughter; [Elizabeth Hall, filia mea unica, tortura oris defædata.] In the beginning of April in that year she visited London, and returned to Stratford on the 22d; an enterprize at that time “of great pith and moment.”

While we lament that our incomparable poet was snatched from the world at a time when his faculties were in their full vigour, and before he was “declined into the vale of years,” let us be thankful that “this sweetest child of Fancy” did not perish while he yet lay in the cradle. He was born at Stratford-upon-Avon in April 1564; and I have this moment learned from the Register of that town that the plague broke out there on the 30th of the following June, and raged with such violence between that day and the last day of December, that two hundred and thirty eight persons were in that period carried to the grave, of which number probably 216 died of that malignant distemper; and one only of the whole number resided, not in Stratford, but in the neighbouring town of Welcombe. From the 237 inhabitants of Stratford, whose names appear in the Register, twenty-one are to be subducted, who, it may be presumed, would have died in six months, in the ordinary course of nature; for in the five preceding years, reckoning, according to the style of that time, from March 25, 1559, to March 25, 1564, two hundred and twenty one persons were buried at Stratford, of whom 210 were townsmen: that is, of these latter 42 died each year, at an average. Supposing one in thirty-five to have died annually, the total number of the inhabitants of Stratford at that period was 1470; and consequently the plague in the last six months of the year 1564 carried off more than a seventh part of them. Fortunately for mankind it did not reach the house in which the infant Shakspeare lay; for not one of that name appears in the dead list.—May we suppose, that, like Horæe, he lay secure and fearless in the midst of contagion and death, protected by the Muses to whom his future life was to be devoted, and covered over

————— sacra
Lauroque, collataque myrto,
Non sine Diis animosus infans. MALONE.

3 — where a monument is placed in the wall.] He is represented under an arch, in a sitting posture, a cushion spread before him, with
a pen

a pen in his right-hand, and his left rested on a scroll of paper. The following Latin distich is engraved under the cushion.

*Judicio Pylum, genio Socratem, arte Maronem,
Terra tegit, populus mæret, Olympus habet.* THEOBALD.

The first syllable in *Socratem* is here made short, which cannot be allowed. Perhaps we should read *Sophoclem*. Shakspeare is then appositely compared with a dramatick author among the ancients: but still it should be remembered that the elogium is lessened while the metre is reformed; and it is well known that some of our early writers of Latin poetry were uncommonly negligent in their prosody, especially in proper names. The thought of this distich, as Mr. Tollet observes, might have been taken from the Faëry Queene of Spenser, b. ii. c. 9. st. 48, and c. 10. st. 3.

To this Latin inscription on Shakspeare should be added the lines which are found underneath it on his monument:

Stay, passenger, why dost thou go so fast?
Read, if thou canst, whom envious death hath plac'd
Within this monument; Shakspeare, with whom
Quick nature dy'd; whose name doth deck the tomb
Far more than cost; since all that he hath writ
Leaves living art but page to serve his wit.

Obiit An^o. Dñi. 1616.

æt. 53, die 23 Apr. STEEVENS.

It appears from the Verses of Leonard Digges that our authour's monument was erected before the year 1623. It has been engraved by Vertuë, and done in Mezzotinto by Miller.

A writer in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. XXIX. p. 267, says, there is as strong a resemblance between the bust at Stratford, and the portrait of our authour prefixed to the first folio edition of his plays, "as can well be between a statue and a picture." To me (and I have viewed it several times with a good deal of attention) it appeared in a very different light. When I went last to Stratford, I carried with me the only genuine prints of Shakspeare that were then extant, and I could not trace any resemblance between them and this figure. There is a pertness in the countenance of the latter totally differing from that placid composure and thoughtful gravity, so perceptible in his original portrait and his best prints. Our poet's monument having been erected by his son-in-law Dr. Hall, the statuary probably had the assistance of some picture, and failed only from want of skill to copy it.

Mr. Granger observes, (*Biog. Hist.* Vol. I. p. 259,) that "it has been said there never was an original portrait of Shakspeare, but that Sir Thomas Clarges after his death caused a portrait to be drawn for him from a person who nearly resembled him." This entertaining writer was a great collector of anecdotes, but not always very scrupulous in inquiring into the authenticity of the information which he procured; for this improbable tale, I find, on examination, stands only

126 SOME ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE, &c.

only on the assertion of an anonymous writer in *the Gentleman's Magazine* for August 1759, who boldly "affirmed it as an absolute fact;" but being afterwards publickly called upon to produce his authority, never produced any. There is the strongest reason therefore to presume it a forgery.

"Mr. Walpole" (adds Mr. Granger) "informs me, that the only original picture of Shakspeare is that which belonged to Mr. Keck, from whom it passed to Mr. Nicoll, whose only daughter married the Marquis of Caernarvon" [now duke of Chandos].

From this picture, his Grace, at my request, very obligingly permitted a drawing to be made by that excellent artist Mr. Ozias Humphry; and from that drawing the print prefixed to the present edition has been engraved.

In the manuscript notes of the late Mr. Oldys, this portrait is said to have been "painted by old Cornelius Jansen." "Others," he adds, "say, that it was done by Richard Burbage the player;" and in another place he ascribes it to "John Taylor, the player." This Taylor, it is said in *the Critical Review* for 1770, left it by *will* to Sir William D'Avenant. But unluckily there was no player of the christian and surname of John Taylor, contemporary with Shakspeare. The player who performed in Shakspeare's company, was Joseph Taylor. There was however a *painter* of the name of *John Taylor*, to whom in his early youth it is barely possible that we may have been indebted for the only original portrait of our authour; for in the Picture-Gallery at Oxford are two portraits of Taylor the Water-poet, and on each of them "*John Taylor pinx. 1655.*" There appears some resemblance of *manner* between these portraits and the picture of Shakspeare in the duke of Chandos's collection. That picture (I express the opinion of Sir Joshua Reynolds) has not the least air of Cornelius Jansen's performances.

That this picture was once in the possession of Sir Wm. D'Avenant is highly probable; but it is much more likely to have been *purchased* by him from some of the players after the theatres were shut up by authority, and the veterans of the stage were reduced to great distress, than to have been bequeathed to him by the person who painted it; in whose custody it is improbable that it should have remained. Sir William D'Avenant appears to have died insolvent. There is no Will of his in the Prerogative-Office; but administration of his effects was granted to John Otway, his *principal creditor*, in May 1668. After his death, Betterton the actor bought it, probably at a publick sale of his effects. While it was in Betterton's possession, it was engraved by Vandergucht, for Mr. Rowe's edition of Shakspeare, in 1709. Betterton made no will, and died very indigent. He had a large collection of portraits of actors in crayons, which were bought at the sale of his goods by Bullfinch the Printseller, who sold them to one Mr. Sykes. The portrait of Shakspeare was purchased by Mrs. Barry the actress, who sold it afterwards for 40 guineas to Mr. Robert Keck. In 1719, while it was in Mr. Keck's possession, an engraving was made
from

from it by Vertue: a large half-sheet. Mr. Nicoll of Colney-Hatch, Middlesex, marrying the heiress of the Keck family, this picture devolved to him; and while in his possession, it was, in 1747, engraved by Houbraken for Birch's *Illustrious Heads*. By the marriage of the duke of Chandos with the daughter of Mr. Nicoll, it became his Grace's property.

Sir Godfrey Kneller painted a picture of our authour, which he presented to Dryden, but from what picture he copied, I am unable to ascertain, as I have never seen Kneller's picture. The poet repaid him by an elegant copy of Verses.—See his Poems, Vol. II. p. 231, edit. 1743:

- “ Shakspeare, thy gift, I place before my sight,
 “ With awe I ask his blessing as I write;
 “ With reverence look on his majestick face,
 “ Proud to be less, but of his godlike race.
 “ His soul inspires me, while thy praise I write,
 “ And I like Teucer under Ajax fight:
 “ Bids thee, through me, be bold; with dauntless breast
 “ Contemn the bad, and emulate the best:
 “ Like his, thy criticks in the attempt are lost.
 “ When most they rail, know then, they envy most.”

It appears from a circumstance mentioned by Dryden, that these verses were written after the year 1683: probably after Rymer's book had appeared in 1693. Dryden having made no will, and his wife Lady Elizabeth renouncing, administration was granted on the 10th of June 1700, to his son Charles, who was drowned in the Thames near Windsor in 1704. His younger brother Erasmus succeeded to the title of Baronet, and died without issue in 1711; but I know not what became of his effects, or where this picture is now to be found.

About the year 1725 a mezzotinto of Shakspeare was scraped by Simon, said to be done from an original picture painted by Zouft or Soest, then in the possession of T. Wright, painter, in Covent-Garden. The earliest known picture painted by Zouft in England, was done in 1657; so that if he ever painted a picture of Shakspeare, it must have been a copy. It could not however have been made from D'Avenant's picture, (unless the painter took very great liberties) for the whole air, dress, disposition of the hair, &c. are different. I have lately seen a picture in the possession of — Douglas, Esq. at Teddington near Twickenham, which is, I believe, the very picture from which Simon's Mezzotinto was made. It is on canvas, (about 24 inches by 20,) and somewhat smaller than the life.

The earliest print of our poet that appeared, is that in the title-page of the first folio edition of his works, 1623, engraved by Martin Droeshout. On this print the following lines, addressed to THE READER, were written by Ben Jonson:

- “ This figure that thou here seest put,
 “ It was for gentle Shakspeare cut;

“ Wherein

" Wherein the graver had a strife
 " With nature, to out-do the life.
 " O, could he but have drawn his wit
 " As well in brass, as he hath hit
 " His face, the print would then surpass
 " All that was ever writ in brass;
 " But since he cannot, reader, look
 " Not on his picture, but his book."

Droeshout engraved also the heads of John Fox the martyrologist, Montjoy Blount, son of Charles Blount Earl of Devonshire, William Fairfax who fell at the siege of Frankendale in 1623, and John Howson, Bishop of Durham. The portrait of Bishop Howson is at Christchurch, Oxford. By comparing any of these prints (the two latter of which are well executed) with the original pictures from whence the engravings were made, a better judgment might be formed of the fidelity of our authour's portrait, as exhibited by this engraver, than from Jonson's assertion, that " in this figure

" — the graver had a strife
 " With nature, to out-do the life;"

a compliment which in the books of that age was paid to so many engravers, that nothing decisive can be inferred from it.—It does not appear from what picture this engraving was made: but from the dress, and the singular disposition of the hair, &c. it undoubtedly was engraved from a picture, and probably a very ordinary one. There is no other way of accounting for the great difference between this print of Droeshout's, and his spirited portraits of Fairfax and Bishop Howson, but by supposing that the picture of Shakspeare from which he copied was a very coarse performance.

The next print in point of time is, according to Mr. Walpole, and Mr. Granger, that executed by J. Payne, a scholar of Simon Pass, in 1634; with a laurel branch in the poet's left-hand. A print of Shakspeare by so excellent an engraver as Payne, would probably exhibit a more perfect representation of him than any other of those times; but I much doubt whether any such ever existed. Mr. Granger, I apprehend, has erroneously attributed to Payne the head done by Marshall in 1640, (apparently from Droeshout's larger print,) which is prefixed to a spurious edition of Shakspeare's Poems published in that year. In Marshall's print the poet *has a laurel branch in his left-hand*. Neither Mr. Walpole, nor any of the other great collectors of prints, are possessed of, or ever saw, any print of Shakspeare by Payne, as far as I can learn.

Two other prints only remain to be mentioned; one engraved by Vertue in 1721, for Mr. Pope's edition of our authour's plays in quarto; said to be engraved from an original picture in the possession of the earl of Oxford; and another, a mezzotinto, by Earlom, prefixed to an edition of *King Lear*, in 1770; said to be done from an original by Cornelius Jansen, in the collection of Charles Jennens,

Eq; but, Mr. Granger justly observes, "as it is dated in 1610, before Jansen was in England, it is highly probable that it was not painted by him, at least, that he did not paint it as a portrait of Shakspeare."

Most of the other prints of Shakspeare that have appeared, were copied from some or other of those which I have mentioned. MALONE.

"The portrait palmed upon Mr. Pope" (I use the words of the late Mr. Oldys, in a Ms. note to his copy of Langbaine,) "for an original of Shakspeare, from which he had his fine plate engraven, is evidently a juvenile portrait of King James I." I am no judge in these matters, but only deliver an opinion, which if ill-grounded may be easily overthrown. The portrait to me at least, has no traits of Shakspeare.

STEEVENS.

4 *On his grave-stone underneath is, Good friend, &c.]* This epitaph is expressed in the following uncouth mixture of small and capital letters:

Good Frend for Iesus SAKE forbear
To digg **TE** Dust Encloused HERE
Blese be **TE** Man **T** spares **TE**s Stones
And curst be He **T** moves my Bones. STEEVENS.

5 *And curst be he that moves my bones.]* It is uncertain whether this epitaph was written by Shakspeare himself, or by one of his friends after his death. The imprecation contained in this last line, was perhaps suggested by an apprehension that our authour's remains might share the same fate with those of the rest of his countrymen, and be added to the immense pile of human bones deposited in the charnel-house at Stratford. This, however, is mere conjecture; for similar execrations are found in many ancient Latin epitaphs.

Mr. Steevens has justly mentioned it as a singular circumstance, that Shakspeare does not appear to have written any verses on his contemporaries, either in praise of the living, or in honour of the dead. I once imagined that he had mentioned Spenser with kindness in one of his Sonnets; but have lately discovered that the sonnet to which I allude, was written by Richard Barnefield. If, however, the following epitaphs be genuine, (and indeed the latter is much in Shakspeare's manner,) he in two instances overcame that modest diffidence, which seems to have supposed the elogium of his humble muse of no value.

In a Manuscript volume of poems by William Herrick and others, in the hand-writing of the time of Charles I. which is among Rawlinson's Collections in the Bodleian Library, is the following epitaph, ascribed to our poet.

" AN EPITAPH.

" When God was pleas'd, the world unwilling yet,
" Elias James to nature paid his debt,
" And here repositeth; as he liv'd, he dyde;
" The saying in him strongly vereside,—
" Such life, such death: then, the known truth to tell,
" He liv'd a godly life, and dyde as well.

WM. SHAKSPEARE."

130 SOME ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE, &c.

There was formerly a family of the surname of *James* at Stratford. *Anne*, the wife of *Richard James*, was buried there on the same day with our poet's widow; and *Margaret*, the daughter of *John James*, died there in April 1616.

A monumental inscription "of a better leer," and said to be written by our authour, is preserved in a collection of Epitaphs, at the end of the Visitation of Salop, taken by Sir William Dugdale in the year 1664, now remaining in the College of Arms, C. 35, fol. 20; a transcript of which Sir Isaac Heard, Garter, Principal King at Arms, has obligingly transmitted to me.

Among the monuments in Tongue Church in the county of Salop, is one erected in remembrance of Sir Thomas Stanley, knight, who died, as I imagine, about the year 1600. In the Visitation-book it is thus described by Sir William Dugdale:

"On the north side of the chancell stands a very stately tombe, supported with Corinthian columnes. It hath two figures of men in armour, thereon lying, the one below the arches and columnes, and the other above them, and this epitaph upon it.

"Thomas Stanley, Knight, second son of Edward Earle of Derby, Lord Stanley and Strange, descended from the famielie of the Stanleys, married Margaret Vernon, one of the daughters and co-heires of Sir George Vernon of Nether-Haddon, in the county of Derby, Knight, by whome he had issue two sons, Henry and Edward. Henry died an infant; Edward survived, to whom those lordships descended; and married the lady Lucie Percie, second daughter of the Earle of Northumberland: by her he had issue seaven daughters. She and her foure daughters, Arabella, Marie, Alice, and Priscilla, are interred under a monument in the church of Waltham in the county of Essex. Thomas, her son, died in his infancy, and is buried in the parish church of Winwich in the county of Lancaster. The other three, Petronilla, Frances, and Venesia, are yet living.

These following verses were made by WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE, the late famous tragedian.

"*Written upon the east end of this tombe.*

"Aske who lyes here, but do not weepe;
 "He is not dead, he doth but sleepe.
 "This stony register is for his bones,
 "His fame is more perpetual than these stones:
 "And his own goodnes, with himself being gone,
 "Shall live, when earthly monument is none.

"*Written upon the west end thereof.*

"Not monumental stone preserves our fame,
 "Nor skye-aspiring pyramids our name.
 "The memory of him for whom this stands,
 "Shall out-live marble, and defacers' hands.
 "When all to time's consumption shall be given,
 "Stanley, for whom this stands, shall stand in heaven."

The

He had three daughters³, of which two lived to be married; Judith, the elder, to one Mr. Thomas Quiney⁴,
was

The last line of this epitaph, though the worst, bears very strong marks of the hand of Shakspeare. The beginning of the first line, "Ask who lyes here," reminds us of that which we have been just examining: "*If any man ask, who lies in this tomb,*" &c.—Sir William Dugdale was born in Warwickshire, was bred at the free-school of Coventry, and in the year 1625 purchased the manor of Blythe in that county, where he then settled and afterwards spent a great part of his life: so that his testimony respecting this epitaph is sufficient to ascertain its authenticity. MALONE.

3 *He had three daughters,*] In this circumstance Mr. Rowe must have been misinformed. In the Register of Stratford, no mention is made of any daughter of our authour's but Susanna and Judith. He had indeed three *children*; the two already mentioned, and a son, named Hamnet, of whom Mr. Rowe takes no notice. He was a twin child, born at the same time with Judith. Hence probably the mistake. He died in the twelfth year of his age, in 1596. MALONE.

4 — *Judith, the elder, to one Mr. Thomas Quiney,*] This also is a mistake. Judith was Shakspeare's youngest daughter. She died at Stratford-upon-Avon a few days after she had completed her seventy-seventh year, and was buried there, Feb. 9, 1661-62. She was married to Mr. Quiney, who was four years younger than herself, on the 10th of February, 1615-16, and not as Mr. West supposed, in the year 1616-17. He was led into the mistake by the figures 1616 standing nearly opposite to the entry concerning her marriage; but those figures relate to the first entry in the subsequent month of April. The Register appears thus:

February.—

3. Francis Bushill to Isabel Whood.

1616. 5. Rich. Sandells to Joan Ballamy.

10. Tho. Quiney to Judith Shakspeare.

April.—

14. Will. Borowes to Margaret Davies.

and all the following entries in that and a part of the ensuing page are of 1616; the year then beginning on the 25th of March. Whether the above 10 relates to the month of February or April, Judith was certainly married before her father's death: if it relates to February, she was married on February 10, 1615-16; if to April, on the 10th of April 1616. From Shakspeare's will it appears, that this match was a stolen one; for he speaks of such future "*husband as she shall be married to.*" It is strange that the ceremony should have been publicly celebrated in the church of Stratford without his knowledge; and the improbability of such a circumstance might lead us to suppose that she was married on the 10th of April, about a fortnight after the execution of her father's will. But the entry of the

132 SOME ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE, &c.

by whom she had three sons, who all died without children; and Susanna, who was his favourite, to Dr. John Hall, a physician of good reputation in that country^s. She left one child only, a daughter, who

was

baptism of her first child, (Nov. 23, 1616,) as well as the entry of the marriage, ascertain it to have taken place in February.

Mr. West, without intending 'it, has impeached the character of this lady; for her first child, according to his representation, must be supposed to have been born some months before her marriage; since among the Baptisms I find this entry of the christening of her eldest son: "1616. Nov. 23. Shakspeare, filius Thomas Quiney, Gent." and according to Mr. West she was not married till the following February. This *Shakspeare Quiney* died in his infancy at Stratford, and was buried May 8th, 1617. Judith's second son, *Richard*, was baptized on February 9th, 1617-18. He died at Stratford in Feb. 1638-9, in the 21st year of his age, and was buried there on the 26th of that month. Her third son, *Thomas*, was baptized August 29, 1619, and was buried also at Stratford, January 28, 1638-9. There had been a plague in the town in the preceding summer, that carried off about fifty persons. MALONE.

5 *Dr. John Hall, a physician of good reputation in that country.* [Susanna's husband, Dr. John Hall, died in Nov. 1635, and is interred in the chancel of the church of Stratford near his wife. He was buried on the 26th of November, as appears from the Register of burials at Stratford:

"November 26, 1635, Johannes Hall, medicus peritissimus."

The following is a transcript of his will, extracted from the Registry of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury:

"The last Will and Testament nuncupative of John Hall of Stratford-upon-Avon in the county of Warwick, Gent. made and declared the five and twentieth of November, 1635. *Imprimis*, I give unto my wife my house in London. *Item*, I give unto my daughter Nash my house in Acton. *Item*, I give unto my daughter Nash my meadow. *Item*, I give my goods and money unto my wife and my daughter Nash, to be equally divided betwixt them. *Item*, concerning my study of books, I leave them, said he, to you, my son Nash, to dispose of them as you see good. As for my manuscripts, I would have given them to Mr. Boles, if he had been here; but forasmuch as he is not here present, you may, son Nash, burn them, or do with them what you please. Witnesses hereunto,

Thomas Nash.
Simon Trapp."

The testator not having appointed any executor, administration was granted to his widow, Nov. 23, 1636.

Some at least of Dr. Hall's manuscripts escaped the flames, one of them being yet extant. See p. 123, n. 2.

I could

I could not, after a very careful search, find the will of Susanna Hall in the Prerogative-office, nor is it preserved in the Archives of the diocese of Worcester, the Registrar of which diocese at my request very obligingly examined the indexes of all the wills proved in his office between the years 1649 and 1670; but in vain. The town of Stratford-upon-Avon is in that diocese.

The inscriptions on the tomb-stones of our poet's favourite daughter and her husband are as follows:

"Here lyeth the body of John Hall, Gent. he marr. Susanna, & daughter and co-heire of Will. Shakspeare, Gent. he deceased Nov. 25, A^o. 1635, aged 60."

- "Hallius hic situs est, medica celeberrimus arte,
- "Expectans regni gaudia læta Dei.
- "Dignus erat meritis qui Nestora vinceret annis;
- "In terris omnes sed rapit æqua dies.
- "Ne tumulto quid desit, adest fidissima conjux,
- "Et vitæ comitem nunc quoque mortis habet."

These verses should seem, from the last two lines, not to have been inscribed on Dr. Hall's tomb-stone till 1649. Perhaps indeed the last distich only was then added.

"Here lyeth the body of Susanna, wife to John Hall, Gent. ye daughter of William Shakspeare, Gent. She deceased the 11th of July, A^o. 1649, aged 66."

- "Witty above her sexe, but that's not all,
- "Wife to salvation was good Mistriss Hall.
- "Something of Shakspeare was in that, but this
- "Wholy of him with whom she's now in blisse.

- "Then, passenger, hast ne're a teare,
- "To weepe with her that wept with all:
- * That wept, yet set her selfe to chere
- "Them up with comforts cordiall.

- "Her love shall live, her mercy spread,
- "When thou hast ne're a teare to shed."

The foregoing English verses, which are preserved by Dugdale, are not now remaining, half of the tomb-stone having been cut away, and another half stone joined to it; with the following inscription on it.—
"Here lyeth the body of Richard Watts of Ryhon-Clifford, in the parish of old Stratford, Gent. who departed this life the 23d of May, Anno Dom. 1707, and in the 46th year of his age." This Mr. Watts, as I am informed by the Rev. Mr. Davenport, was owner of, and lived at, the estate of Ryhon-Clifford, which was once the property of Dr. Hall.

Mrs. Hall was buried on the 16th of July, 1649, as appears from the Register of Stratford. MALONE.

134 SOME ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE, &c.

was married first to Thomas Nashe⁶, esq. and afterwards

⁶ *She left one child only, a daughter, who was married first to Thomas Nashe, Esq.*] Elizabeth, our poet's grand-daughter, who appears to have been a favourite, Shakspeare having left her by his will a memorial of his affection, though she at that time was but eight years old, was born in February 1607-8, as appears by an entry in the Register of Stratford, which Mr. West omitted in the transcript with which he furnished Mr. Steevens. I learn from the same register that she was married in 1626: "MARRIAGES. April 22, 1626, Mr. Thomas Nash to Mistris Elizabeth Hall." It should be remembered that every unmarried lady was called *Mistress* till the time of George I. Hence our authour's *Mistress* Anne Page. Nor in speaking of an unmarried lady could her christian name be omitted, as it often is at present; for then no distinction would have remained between her and her mother. Some married ladies indeed were distinguished from their daughters by the title of *Madam*.

Mr. Nash died in 1647, as appears by the inscription on his tombstone in the chancel of the church of Stratford.

"Here resteth ye body of Thomas Nashe, Esq. He mar. Elizabeth the daugh. and heire of John Hall, Gent. He died April 4th, A^o. 1647, aged 53."

"*Fata manent omnes; hunc non virtute carentem,*

"*Ut neque divitiis, abstulit atra dies.*

"*Abstulit, at referet lux ultima. Siste, viator;*

"*Si peritura paras, per male parta peris.*"

The letters printed in Italicks are now obliterated.

By his last will, which is in the Prerogative-office, dated August 25, 1642, he bequeathed to his well beloved wife, Elizabeth Nash, and her assigns, for her life, (in lieu of jointure and thirds,) one messuage or tenement, with the appurtenances, situate in the Chapel-Street in Stratford, then in the tenure and occupation of Joan Norman, widow; one meadow, known by the name of the Square Meadow, with the appurtenances, in the parish of old Stratford, lying near unto the great stone-bridge of Stratford; one other meadow with the appurtenances, known by the name of the Wash Meadow; one little meadow with the appurtenances, adjoining to the said Wash Meadow; and also all the tythes of the manor or lordship of Shottery. He devises to his kinsman Edward Nash, the son of his uncle George Nash of London, his heirs and assigns, (*inter alia*) the messuage or tenement, then in his own occupation, called *The New-Place*, situate in the Chapel-Street, in Stratford; together with all and singular houses, outhouses, barns, stables, orchards, gardens, easements, profits, or commodities, to the same belonging; and also four-yard land of arable land, meadow, and pasture, with the appurtenances, lying and being in the common fields of Old Stratford, with all the easements, profits, commons, commodities, and hereditaments, to the same four-yard lands belonging; then in the tenure, use, and occupation

wards to Sir John Bernard of Abington⁷, but died likewise without issue⁸.

This

of him the said Thomas Nash; and one other messuage or tenement, with the appurtenances, situate in the parish of —, in London, and called or known by the name of *the Wardrobe*, and then in the tenure, use and occupation of — Dickes. And from and after the death of his said wife, he bequeaths the meadows above named, and devised to her for life, to his said cousin, Edward Nash, his heirs and assigns for ever. After various other bequests, he directs that one hundred pounds, at the least, be laid out in mourning gowns, cloaks, and apparel, to be distributed among his kindred and friends, in such manner as his executrix shall think fit. He appoints his wife Elizabeth Nash his residuary legatee, and sole executrix, and ordains Edmund Rawlins, William Smith, and John Ezstou, overseers of his will, to which the witnesses are John Such, Michael Johnson, and Samuel Rawlins.

By a nuncupative codicil dated on the day of his death, April 4th, 1647, he bequeaths (*inter alia*) "to his mother Mrs. Hall fifty pounds; to Elizabeth Hathaway fifty pounds; to Thomas Hathaway fifty pounds; to Judith Hathaway ten pounds; to his uncle Nash and his aunt, his cousin Sadler and his wife, his cousin Richard Quiney and his wife, his cousin Thomas Quiney and his wife, twenty shillings each, to buy them rings." The meadows which by his will he had devised to his wife for life, he by this codicil devises to her, her heirs and assigns, for ever, to the end that they may not be severed from her own land; and he "appoints and declares that the inheritance of his land given to his cousin Edward Nash should be by him settled after his decease, upon his son Thomas Nash, and his heirs, and for want of such heirs, then to remain and descend to his own right heirs."

It is observable that in this will the testator makes no mention of any child, and there is no entry of any issue of his marriage in the Register of Stratford; I have no doubt therefore that he died without issue, and that a pedigree with which Mr. Whalley furnished Mr. Steevens a few years ago, is inaccurate. The origin of the mistake in that pedigree will be pointed out in its proper place.

As by Shakspeare's will his daughter Susanna had an estate for life in the *New Place*, &c. and his grand-daughter Elizabeth an estate tail in remainder. they probably on the marriage of Elizabeth to Mr. Nash, by a fine and recovery cut off the entail; and by a deed to lead the uses gave him the entire dominion over that estate; which he appears to have misused by devising it from Shakspeare's family to his own.

Mr. Nash's will and codicil were proved June 5, 1647, and administration was then granted to his widow. MALONE.

⁷ — *Sir John Barnard of Abington*,] Sir John Barnard of Abington, a small village about a mile from the town of Northampton, was created a knight by King Charles II. Nov. 25, 1661. In 1671 he sold the manor and advowson of the church of Abington, which his ancestors had possessed for more than two hundred years, to William

136 SOME ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE, &c.

Thursby, Esq. Sir John Barnard was the eldest son of Baldwin Barnard, esq. by Eleanor, daughter and co-heir of John Fulwood of Ford-Hall in the county of Warwick, esq. and was born in 1605. He first married Elizabeth, the daughter of Sir Clement Edmonds of Preston, in Northamptonshire, by whom he had four sons and four daughters. She dying in 1642, he married secondly our poet's grand-daughter, Mrs. Elizabeth Nash, on the 5th of June 1649, at Billesley in Warwickshire, about three miles from Stratford-upon-Avon. If any of Shakspeare's manuscripts remained in his grand-daughter's custody at the time of her second marriage, (and some *letters* at least she surely must have had,) they probably were then removed to the house of her new husband at Abington. Sir Hugh Clopton, who was born two years after her death, mentioned to Mr. Macklin, in the year 1742, an old tradition that she had carried away with her from Stratford many of her grandfather's papers. On the death of Sir John Barnard they must have fallen into the hands of Mr. Edward Bagley, Lady Barnard's executor; and if any descendant of that gentleman be now living, in his custody they probably remain. MALONE.

⁸ — *but died likewise without issue.*] Confiding in a pedigree transmitted by Mr. Whalley some years ago to Mr. Steevens, I once supposed that Mr. Rowe was inaccurate in saying that our poet's grand-daughter died without issue. But he was certainly right; and this lady was undoubtedly the last lineal descendant of Shakspeare. There is no entry, as I have already observed, in the Register of Stratford, of any issue of hers by Mr. Nash; nor does he in his will mention any child, devising the greater part of his property between his wife and his kinsman, Edward Nash. That Lady Barnard had no issue by her second husband, is proved by the Register of Abington, in which there is no entry of the baptism of any child of that marriage, though there are regular entries of the time when the several children of Sir John Barnard by his first wife were baptized. Lady Barnard died at Abington, and was buried there on the 17th of February 1669-70; but her husband did not shew his respect for her memory by a monument, or even an inscription of any kind. He seems not to have been sensible of the honourable alliance he had made. Shakspeare's grand-daughter would not, at this day, go to her grave without a memorial. By her last will, which I subjoin, she directs her trustee to sell her estate of *New-Place*, &c. to the best bidder, and to offer it first to her cousin Mr. Edward Nash. How she then came to have any property in *New-Place*, which her first husband had devised to this very Edward Nash, does not appear; but I suppose that after the death of Mr. Thomas Nash she exchanged the patrimonial lands which he bequeathed to her, with Edward Nash and his son, and took *New-Place*, &c. instead of them.

Sir John Barnard died at Abington, and was buried there on March 5th, 1673-4. On his tomb-stone in the chancel of the church is the following inscription:

Hic jacent exuviae generosissimi viri Johannis Bernard, militis; patre, avo, abavo, tritavo, aliisque progenitoribus per ducentos et amplius annos bujus oppidi de Abingdon dominis, insignis: qui sacro
cessit

This is what I could learn of any note, either relating to

cessit undeseptuagesimo ætatis suæ anno, quinto nonas Martii, annoque a partu B. Virginis, MDCLXXIII.

Sir John Barnard having made no will, administration of his effects was granted on the 7th of November 1674, to Henry Gilbert of Locko in the county of Derby, who had married his daughter Elizabeth by his first wife, and to his two other surviving daughters; Mary Higgs, widow of Thomas Higgs of Coleborne, esq. and Eleanor Cotton, the wife of Samuel Cotton, esq. All Sir John Barnard's other children except the three above-mentioned died without issue. I know not whether any descendant of these be now living: but if that should be the case, among their papers may possibly be found some fragment or other relative to Shakspeare; for by his grand-daughter's order, the administrators of her husband were entitled to keep possession of her house, &c. in Stratford, for six months after her death.

The following is a copy of the will of this last descendant of our poet, extracted from the Registry of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury:

In the Name of God, Amen. I Dame Elizabeth Barnard, wife of Sir John Barnard of Abington in the county of Northampton, knight, being in perfect memory, (blessed be God!) and mindful of mortality, do make this my last will and testament in manner and form following.

Whereas by my certain deed or writing under my hand and seal, dated on or about the eighteenth day of April 1653, according to a power therein mentioned, I the said Elizabeth have limited and disposed of all that my messuage with the appurtenances in Stratford-upon-Avon, in the county of Warwick, called the New Place, and all that four-yard land and an half in Stratford-Welcombe and Bishop-ton in the county of Warwick, (after the decease of the said Sir John Barnard, and me the said Elizabeth,) unto Henry Smith of Stratford aforesaid, Gent, and Job Dighton of the Middle Temple, London, Esq. since deceased, and their heirs; upon trust that they, and the survivor, and the heirs of such survivor, should bargain and sell the same for the best value they can get, and the money thereby to be raised to be employed and disposed of to such person and persons, and in such manner as I the said Elizabeth should by any writing or note under my hand, truly testified, declare and nominate; as thereby may more fully appear. Now my will is, and I do hereby signify and declare my mind and meaning to be, that the said Henry Smith, my surviving trustee, or his heirs, shall with all convenient speed after the decease of the said Sir John Barnard my husband, make sale of the inheritance of all and singular the premises, and that my loving cousin Edward Nash, Esq. shall have the first offer or refusal thereof, according to my promise formerly made to him: and the monies to be raised by such sale I do give, dispose of, and appoint the same to be paid and distributed, as is herein after expressed; that is to say, to my cousin Thomas Welles of Carleton, in the county of Bedford, Gent. the
sum

138 SOME ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE, &c.

to himself or family: the character of the man is best seen in his writings. But since Ben Jonson has made a
fort

sum of fifty pounds, to be paid him within one year next after such sale: and if the said Thomas Wells shall happen to die before such time as his said legacy shall become due to him, then my desire is, that my kinsman Edward Bagley, citizen of London, shall have the sole benefit thereof.

Item, I do give and appoint unto Judith Hathaway, one of the daughters of my kinsman Thomas Hathaway, late of Stratford aforesaid, the annual sum of five pounds of lawful money of England, to be paid unto her yearly and every year, from and after the decease of the survivor of the said Sir John Barnard and me the said Elizabeth, for and during the natural life of her the said Judith, at the two most usual feasts or days of payment in the year, *videlicet*, the feast of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and Saint Michael the archangel, by equal portions, the first payment thereof to begin at such of the said feasts as shall next happen, after the decease of the survivor of the said Sir John Barnard and me the said Elizabeth, if the said premises can be so soon sold; or otherwise so soon as the same can be sold: and if the said Judith shall happen to marry, and shall be minded to release the said annual sum of five pounds, and shall accordingly release and quit all her interest and right in and to the same after it shall become due to her, then and in such case, I do give and appoint to her the sum of forty pounds in lieu thereof, to be paid unto her at the time of the executing of such release as aforesaid.

Item, I give and appoint unto Joan the wife of Edward Kent, and one other of the daughters of the said Thomas Hathaway, the sum of fifty pounds, to be likewise paid unto her within one year next after the decease of the survivor of the said Sir John Barnard and me the said Elizabeth, if the said premises can be soon sold, or otherwise so soon as the same can be sold; and if the said Joan shall happen to die before the said fifty pounds shall be paid to her, then I do give and appoint the same unto Edward Kent the younger, her son, to be paid unto him when he shall attain the age of one-and-twenty years.

Item, I do also give and appoint unto him the said Edward Kent, son of the said Joan, the sum of thirty pounds, towards putting him out as an apprentice, and to be paid and disposed of to that use when he shall be fit for it.

Item, I do give or appoint and dispose of unto Rose, Elizabeth, and Susanna, three other of the daughters of my said kinsman Thomas Hathaway, the sum of forty pounds apiece, to be paid unto every of them at such time and in such manner as the said fifty pounds before appointed to the said Joan Kent, their sister, shall become payable.

Item, All the rest of the monies that shall be raised by such sale as aforesaid, I give and dispose of unto my said kinsman Edward Bagley, except five pounds only, which I give and appoint to my said trustee Henry Smith for his pains; and if the said Edward Nash shall refuse
the

fort of an essay towards it in his *Discoveries*, I will give it in his words:

“ I remember

the purchase of the said messuage and four-yard land and a half with the appurtenances, then my will and desire is, that the said Henry Smith or his heirs shall sell the inheritance of the said premises and every part thereof unto the said Edward Bagley, and that he shall purchase the same; upon this condition, nevertheless, that he the said Edward Bagley, his heirs, executors, or administrators, shall justly and faithfully perform my will and true meaning, in making due payment of all the several sums of money or legacies before mentioned, in such manner as aforesaid. And I do hereby declare my will and meaning to be that the executors or administrators of my said husband Sir John Barnard shall have and enjoy the use and benefit of my said house in Stratford, called the New-Place, with the orchards, gardens, and all other the appurtenances thereto belonging, for and during the space of six months next after the decease of him the said Sir John Barnard.

Item, I give and devise unto my kinsman Thomas Hart, the son of Thomas Hart, late of Stratford-upon-Avon aforesaid, all that my other messuage or inn situate in Stratford-upon-Avon aforesaid, commonly called the Maidenhead, with the appurtenances, and the next house thereunto adjoining, with the barn belonging to the same, now or late in the occupation of Michael Johnson or his assigns, with all and singular the appurtenances; to hold to him the said Thomas Hart the son, and the heirs of his body; and for default of such issue, I give and devise the same to George Hart, brother of the said Thomas Hart, and to the heirs of his body; and for default of such issue to the right heirs of me the said Elizabeth Barnard for ever.

Item, I do make, ordain and appoint my said loving kinsman Edward Bagley sole executor of this my last will and testament, hereby revoking all former wills; desiring him to see a just performance hereof, according to my true intent and meaning. In witness whereof I the said Elizabeth Barnard have hereunto set my hand and seal, the nine-and-twentieth day of January, Anno Domini, one thousand six hundred and sixty-nine.

ELIZABETH BARNARD.

Signed, sealed, published, and declared, to be the last will and testament of the said Elizabeth Barnard, in the presence of

John Howes, Rector de Abington.

Francis Wickes.

Probatum fuit testamentum suprascriptum apud ædes Exonienses situat. in le Strand, in comitatu Middx. quarto die mensis Martij, 1669, coram venerabili viro Domino Egidio Sweete, milite et legum doctore, surrogato, &c. juramento Edwardi Bagley, unici executor. nominat. cui, &c. de bene, &c. jurat.

MALONE.

“ I remember

146 SOME ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE, &c.

“ I remember the players have often mentioned it as
 “ an honour to Shakspeare, that in writing (whatsoever
 “ he penned) he never blotted out a line? My answer
 “ hath

9 — *that in writing (whatsoever he penned) he never blotted out a line.*] This is not true. They only say in their preface to his plays, that “ his mind and hand went together, and what he thought, he uttered with that easiness, that we have scarce received from him a blot in his papers.” On this Mr. Pope observes, that “ there never was a more groundless report, or to the contrary of which there are more undeniable evidences. As, the comedy of *the Merry Wives of Windsor*, which he entirely new writ; *The History of Henry the Sixth*, which was first published under the title of *The Contention of York and Lancaster*; and that of *Henry V.* extremely improved; that of *Hamlet* enlarged to almost as much again as at first, and many others.”

Surely this is a very strange kind of argument. In the first place this was not a *report*, (unless by that word we are to understand *relation*;) but a positive assertion, grounded on the best evidence that the nature of the subject admitted; namely, ocular proof. The players say, in substance, that Shakspeare had such a happiness of expression, that, as they collect from his papers, he had *seldom* occasion to alter the first words he had set down; in consequence of which they found *scarce* a blot in his writings. And how is this refuted by Mr. Pope? By telling us, that a great many of his plays were *enlarged* by their authour. Allowing this to be true, which is by no means certain, if he had written twenty plays, each consisting of one thousand lines, and afterwards added to each of them a thousand more, would it therefore follow, that he had not written the first thousand with facility and correctness, or that those must have been necessarily *expunged*, because new matter was added to them? Certainly not.—But the truth is, it is by no means clear that our authour did enlarge all the plays mentioned by Mr. Pope, if even that would prove the point intended to be established. Mr. Pope was evidently deceived by the quarto copies. From the play of *Henry V.* being more perfect in the folio edition than in the quarto, nothing follows but that the quarto impression of that piece was printed from a mutilated and imperfect copy, stolen from the theatre, or taken down by ear during the representation. What have been called the *quarto* copies of the Second and Third Parts of *King Henry VI.* were in fact two old plays written before the time of Shakspeare, and entitled *The First Part of the Contention of the two houses of Yorke and Lancaster, &c.* and *The true tragedy of Richard Duke of Yorke, &c.* on which he constructed two new plays; just as on the old plays of *K. John*, and *the Taming of a Shrew*, he formed two other plays with nearly the same titles. See the *Dissertation* in Vol. VI. p. 381.

The tragedy of *Hamlet* in the first edition, (*now extant*;) that of 1604, is said to be “ enlarged to almost as much again as it was, according

" hath been, *Would he had blotted a thousand!* which
 " they thought a malevolent speech. I had not told
 " posterity this, but for their ignorance, who chose that
 " circumstance to commend their friend by, wherein he
 " most faulted: and to justify mine own candour, for I
 " loved the man, and do honour his memory, on this
 " side idolatry, as much as any. He was, indeed, ho-
 " nest, and of an open and free nature, had an excellent
 " fancy, brave notions, and gentle expressions; wherein
 " he flowed with that facility, that sometimes it was
 " necessary he should be stopped: *Sufflaminandus erat*,
 " as Augustus said of Haterius. His wit was in his own
 " power; would the rule of it had been so too. Many
 " times he fell into those things which could not escape
 " laughter; as when he said in the person of Cæsar, one
 " speaking to him,

" *Cæsar thou dost me wrong.*

" He replied:

" *Cæsar did never wrong, but with just cause.*

according to the true and perfect copy." What is to be collected from
 this, but that there was a former *imperfect* edition (I believe, in the
 year 1602)? that the one we are now speaking of was enlarged to as
 much again as it was in the former mutilated impression, and that this
 is the genuine and perfect copy, the other imperfect and spurious?

The *Merry Wives of Windsor*, indeed, and *Romeo and Juliet*, and
 perhaps *Love's Labour's Lost*, our authour appears to have altered and
 amplified; and to *K. Richard II.* what is called the parliament-
 scene, seems to have been added; (though this last is by no means cer-
 tain;) but neither will these augmentations and new-modellings dis-
 prove what has been asserted by Shakspeare's fellow-comedians con-
 cerning the facility of his writing, and the exquisite felicity of his first
 expressions.

The hasty sketch of the *Merry Wives of Windsor*, which he is said
 to have composed in a fortnight, he might have written without a
 blot; and three or four years afterwards, when he chose to dilate his
 plan, he might have composed the additional scenes without a blot
 likewise. In a word, supposing even that Nature had not endowed
 him with that rich vein which he unquestionably possessed, he who
 in little more than twenty years produces thirty-four or thirty-five pieces
 for the stage, has certainly not much time for expunging. MALONE.

" And

142 SOME ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE, &c.

“and such like, which were ridiculous. But he redeemed his vices with his virtues: there was ever more in him to be praised than to be pardoned.”

As for the passage which he mentions out of Shakspeare, there is somewhat like it in *Julius Cæsar*, but without the absurdity; nor did I ever meet with it in any edition that I have seen, as quoted by Mr. Jonson¹.

Besides his plays in this edition², there are two or three ascribed to him by Mr. Langbaine, which I have never seen, and know nothing of. He writ likewise

¹ — nor did I ever meet with it in any edition that I have seen, as quoted by Mr. Jonson.] See Mr. Tyrwhitt's note, Vol. VII. p. 358, n. 1. MALONE.

² Besides his plays in this edition, there are two or three ascribed to him by Mr. Langbaine,] *The Birth of Merlin*, 1662, written by W. Rowley; the old play of *King John* in two parts, 1591, on which Shakspeare formed his *King John*; and *the Arraignment of Paris*, 1584, written by George Peele.

The editor of the folio 1664, subjoined to the 36 dramas published in 1623, seven plays, four of which had appeared in Shakspeare's lifetime with his name in the title-page, viz. *Pericles, Prince of Tyre*, 1609, *Sir John Oldcastle*, 1600, *The London Prodigal*, 1605, and *The Yorkshire Tragedy*, 1608; the three others which they inserted, *Loocrine*, 1595, *Lord Cromwell*, 1602, and *The Puritan*, 1607, having been printed with the initials W. S. in the title-page, the editor chose to interpret those letters to mean William Shakspeare, and ascribed them also to our poet. I published an edition of these seven pieces some years ago, freed in some measure from the gross errors with which they had been exhibited in ancient copies, that the publick might see what they contained; and do not hesitate to declare my firm persuasion that of *Loocrine*, *Lord Cromwell*, *Sir John Oldcastle*, *the London Prodigal*, and *the Puritan*, Shakspeare did not write a single line.

How little the booksellers of former times scrupled to affix the names of celebrated writers to the productions of others, even in the life-time of such celebrated authours, may be collected from Heywood's Translations from Ovid, which in 1612, while Shakspeare was yet living, were ascribed to him. See Vol. X. p. 321, n. 1. With the dead they would certainly make still more free. “This book” (says Anthony Wood, speaking of a work to which the name of Sir Philip Sydney was prefixed) “coming out so late, it is to be inquired whether Sir Philip Sydney's name is not set to it for sale-sake, being a usual thing in these days to set a great name to a book or books, by sharking booksellers, or sniveling writers, to get bread.” *Atben. Oxon.* Vol. I. p. 208. MALONE.

Venus and Adonis, and *Tarquin and Lucrece*, in stanzas, which have been printed in a late collection of poems *. As to the character given of him by Ben Jonson, there is a good deal true in it: but I believe it may be as well expressed by what Horace says of the first Romans, who wrote tragedy upon the Greek models, (or indeed translated them,) in his epistle to Augustus:

— *naturâ sublimis & acer:*

*Nam spirat tragicum satis, et feliciter audet,
Sed turpem putat in chartis metuitque lituram.*

As I have not proposed to myself to enter into a large and complete criticism upon Shakspeare's works, so I will only take the liberty, with all due submission to the judgment of others, to observe some of those things I have been pleased with in looking him over.

His plays are properly to be distinguished only into comedies and tragedies. Those which are called histories, and even some of his comedies, are really tragedies, with a run or mixture of comedy amongst them ³. That way

* — *in a late collection of poems.*] In the fourth volume of *State Poems*, printed in 1707. Mr. Rowe did not go beyond *A late Collection of Poems*, and does not seem to have known that Shakspeare also wrote 154 Sonnets, and a poem entitled *A Lover's Complaint*.

MALONE.

3 — *are really tragedies, with a run or mixture of comedy amongst them.*] Heywood, our authour's contemporary, has stated the best defence that can be made for his intermixing lighter with the more serious scenes of his dramas.

"It may likewise be objected, why amongst sad and grave histories I have here and there inserted fabulous jests and tales favouring of lightness. I answer, I have therein imitated our *historical, and comical poets*, that write to the stage, who, lest the auditory should be dulled with serious courses, which are merely weighty and material, in every act present some Zany, with his mimick action to breed in the lets capable mirth and laughter; *for they that write to all, must strive to please all*. And as such fashion themselves to a multitude diversely addicted, so I to an universality of readers diversely disposed."

Pref. to *History of Women*, 1624. MALONE.

The criticks who renounce tragi-comedy as barbarous, I fear, speak more from notions which they have formed in their closets, than any well-built theory deduced from experience of what pleases or displeases, which ought to be the foundation of all rules.

Even

way of tragi-comedy was the common mistake of that age, and is indeed become so agreeable to the English taste, that though the severer criticks among us cannot bear it, yet the generality of our audiences seem to be better pleased with it than with an exact tragedy. *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *The Comedy of Errors*, and *The Taming of a Shrew*, are all pure comedy; the rest, however they are called, have something of both kinds. It is not very easy to determine which way of writing he was most excellent in. There is certainly a great deal of entertainment in his comical humours; and though they did not then strike at all ranks of people, as the

Even supposing there is no affectation in this refinement, and that those criticks have really tried and purified their minds till there is no dross remaining, still this can never be the case of a popular audience, to which a dramatick representation is referred.

Dryden in one of his prefaces condemns his own conduct in the *Spanish Friar*; but, says he, I did not write it to please myself, it was given to the publick. Here is an involuntary confession that tragi-comedy is more pleasing to the audience; I would ask then, upon what ground it is condemned?

This ideal excellence of uniformity rests upon a supposition that we are either more refined, or a higher order of beings than we really are: there is no provision made for what may be called the animal part of our minds.

Though we should acknowledge this passion for variety and contrarieties to be the vice of our nature, it is still a propensity which we all feel, and which he who undertakes to divert us must find provision for.

We are obliged, it is true, in our pursuit after science, or excellence in any art, to keep our minds steadily fixed for a long continuance; it is a task we impose on ourselves: but I do not wish to task myself in my amusements.

If the great object of the theatre is amusement, a dramatick work must possess every means to produce that effect; if it gives instruction, by the by, so much its merit is the greater; but that is not its principal object. The ground on which it stands, and which gives it a claim to the protection and encouragement of civilised society, is not because it enforces moral precepts, or gives instruction of any kind; but from the general advantage that it produces, by habituating the mind to find its amusement in intellectual pleasures; weaning it from sensuality, and by degrees filing off, smoothing, and polishing, its rugged corners. SIR J. REYNOLDS.

satire

satire of the present age has taken the liberty to do, yet there is a pleasing and a well-distinguished variety in those characters which he thought fit to meddle with. Falstaff is allowed by every body to be a master-piece; the character is always well sustained, though drawn out into the length of three plays; and even the account of his death, given by his old landlady Mrs. Quickly, in the first act of *Henry the Fifth*, though it be extremely natural, is yet as diverting as any part of his life. If there be any fault in the draught he has made of this lewd old fellow, it is, that though he has made him a thief, lying, cowardly, vain-glorious, and in short every way vicious, yet he has given him so much wit as to make him almost too agreeable; and I do not know whether some people have not, in remembrance of the diversion he had formerly afforded them, been sorry to see his friend Hal use him so scurvily, when he comes to the crown in the end of *The Second Part of Henry the Fourth*. Amongst other extravagancies, in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* he has made him a deer-stealer, that he might at the same time remember his Warwickshire prosecutor, under the name of Justice Shallow; he has given him very near the same coat of arms which Dugdale, in his *Antiquities* of that county, describes for a family there⁴, and makes the Welsh parson descant very pleasantly upon them. That whole play is admirable; the humours are various and well opposed; the main design, which is to cure Ford of his unreasonable jealousy, is extremely well conducted. In *Twelfth-Night* there is something singularly ridiculous and pleasant in the fantastical steward Malvolio. The parasite and the vain-glorious in Parolles, in *All's Well that Ends Well*, is as good as any thing of that kind in *Plautus* or *Terence*.

4 — the same coat of arms which Dugdale, in his *Antiquities* of that county, describes for a family there,] There are two coats, I observe, in Dugdale; where three silver fishes are borne in the name of *Lucy*; and another coat to the monument of Thomas Lucy, son of Sir William Lucy, in which are quartered in four several divisions, twelve little fishes, three in each division, probably *lucæ*. This very coat, indeed, seems alluded to in Shallow's giving the *dozen white lucæ*, and in Slender's saying *be may quarter*. THEOBALD.

146 SOME ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE, &c.

Petruchio, in *The Taming of the Shrew*, is an uncommon piece of humour. The conversation of Benedick and Beatrice, in *Much Ado about Nothing*, and of Rosalind, in *As you like it*, have much wit and sprightliness all along. His clowns, without which character there was hardly any play writ in that time, are all very entertaining: and, I believe, Therpsites in *Troilus and Cressida*, and Apemantus in *Timon*, will be allowed to be master-pieces of ill-nature, and satirical snarling. To these I might add, that incomparable character of Shylock the Jew, in *The Merchant of Venice*; but though we have seen that play received and acted as a comedy⁵, and the part of the Jew performed by an excellent comedian, yet I cannot but think it was designed tragically by the author. There appears in it such a deadly spirit of revenge, such a savage fierceness and fellness, and such a bloody designation of cruelty and mischief, as cannot agree either with the stile or characters of comedy. The play itself, take it altogether, seems to me to be one of the most finished of any of Shakspeare's. The tale indeed, in that part relating to the caskets, and the extravagant and unusual kind of bond given by Antonio, is too much removed from the rules of probability; but taking the fact for granted, we must allow it to be very beautifully written. There is something in the friendship of Antonio to Bassanio very great, generous, and tender. The whole fourth act (supposing, as I said, the fact to be probable) is extremely fine. But there are two passages that deserve a particular notice. The first is, what Portia says in praise of mercy, and the other on the power of musick. The melancholy of Jaques,

⁵ — but though we have seen that play received and acted as a comedy,—] In 1701 Lord Lansdown produced his alteration of *The Merchant of Venice*, at the theatre in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, under the title of *The Jew of Venice*, and expressly calls it a comedy. Shylock was performed by Mr. Dogget. REED.

And such was the bad taste of our ancestors that this piece continued to be a stock-play from 1701 to Feb. 14, 1741, when *the Merchant of Venice* was exhibited for the first time at the theatre in Drury-Lane, and Mr. Macklin made his first appearance in the character of Shylock. MALONE.

in

In *As you like it*, is as singular and odd as it is diverting. And if, what Horace says,

Difficile est proprie communia dicere,

it will be a hard task for any one to go beyond him in the description of the several degrees and ages of man's life, though the thought be old, and common enough.

— *All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players;
They have their exits and their entrances;
And one man in his time plays many parts,
His acts being seven ages. At first, the infant,
Mewling and puking in the nurse's arms;
Then, the whining school-boy with his satchel,
And shining morning face, creeping like snail
Unwillingly to school. And then, the lover
Sighing like furnace, with a woful ballad
Made to his mistress' eye-brow. Then, a soldier;
Full of strange oaths, and bearded like the pard,
Jealous in honour, sudden and quick in quarrel,
Seeking the bubble reputation
Ev'n in the cannon's mouth. And then, the justice;
In fair round belly, with good capon lin'd,
With eyes severe, and beard of formal cut,
Full of wise saws and modern instances;
And so he plays his part. The sixth age shifts
Into the lean and slipper'd pantaloon;
With spectacles on nose, and pouch on side;
His youthful hose, well sav'd, a world too wide
For his shrunk shank; and his big manly voice,
Turning again tow'rd childish treble, pipes
And whistles in his sound: Last scene of all,
That ends this strange eventful history,
Is second childishness, and mere oblivion;
Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans every thing.*

His images are indeed every where so lively, that the thing he would represent stands full before you, and you possess every part of it. I will venture to point out

one more, which is, I think, as strong and as uncommon as any thing I ever saw; it is an image of Patience. Speaking of a maid in love, he says,

— *She never told her love,
But let concealment, like a worm i' th' bud,
Feed on her damask cheek: she pin'd in thought,
And sate like Patience on a monument,
Smiling at Grief.*

What an image is here given! and what a task would it have been for the greatest masters of Greece and Rome to have expressed the passions designed by this sketch of statuary! The stile of his comedy is, in general, natural to the characters, and easy in itself; and the wit most commonly sprightly and pleasing, except in those places where he runs into doggerel rhimes, as in *The Comedy of Errors*, and some other plays. As for his jingling sometimes, and playing upon words, it was the common vice of the age he lived in: and if we find it in the pulpit, made use of as an ornament to the sermons of some of the gravest divines of those times, perhaps it may not be thought too light for the stage.

But certainly the greatness of this author's genius does no where so much appear, as where he gives his imagination an entire loose, and raises his fancy to a flight above mankind, and the limits of the visible world. Such are his attempts in *The Tempest*, *Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Macbeth*, and *Hamlet*. Of these, *The Tempest*, however it comes to be placed the first by the publishers of his works, can never have been the first written by him: it seems to me as perfect in its kind, as almost any thing we have of his. One may observe, that the unities are kept here, with an exactness uncommon to the liberties of his writing; though that was what, I suppose, he valued himself least upon, since his excellencies were all of another kind. I am very sensible that he does, in this play, depart too much from that likeness to truth which ought to be observed in these sort of writings; yet he

He does it so very finely, that one is easily drawn in to have more faith for his sake, than reason does well allow of. His magick has something in it very solemn, and very poetical: and that extravagant character of Caliban is mighty well sustained, shews a wonderful invention in the author, who could strike out such a particular wild image, and is certainly one of the finest and most uncommon grotesques that ever was seen. The observation, which I have been informed three very great men concurred in making⁶ upon this part, was extremely just; that *Shakspeare had not only found out a new character in his Caliban, but had also devised and adapted a new manner of language for that character.*

It is the same magick that raises the Fairies in *Midsummer Night's Dream*, the Witches in *Macbeth*, and the Ghost in *Hamlet*, with thoughts and language so proper to the parts they sustain, and so peculiar to the talent of this writer. But of the two last of these plays I shall have occasion to take notice, among the tragedies of Mr. Shakspeare. If one undertook to examine the greatest part of these by those rules which are established by Aristotle, and taken from the model of the Grecian stage, it would be no very hard task to find a great many faults; but as Shakspeare lived under a kind of mere light of nature, and had never been made acquainted with the regularity of those written precepts, so it would be hard to judge him by a law he knew nothing of. We are to consider him as a man that lived in a state of almost universal licence and ignorance: there was no established judge, but every one took the liberty to write according to the dictates of his own fancy. When one considers, that there is not one play before him of a re-

⁶ — which, I have been informed, three very great men concurred in making—] Lord Falkland, Lord C. J. Vaughan, and Mr. Selden.

ROWE.

Dryden was of the same opinion. "His person" (says he, speaking of Caliban,) "is monstrous, as he is the product of unnatural lust, and his language is as hobgoblin as his person: in all things he is distinguished from other mortals." Preface to *Troilus and Cressida*.

MALONE.

putation

putation good enough to entitle it to an appearance on the present stage, it cannot but be a matter of great wonder that he should advance dramattick poetry so far as he did. The fable is what is generally placed the first, among those that are reckoned the constituent parts of a tragick or heroick poem; not, perhaps, as it is the most difficult or beautiful, but as it is the first properly to be thought of in the contrivance and course of the whole; and with the fable ought to be considered the fit disposition, order, and conduct of its several parts. As it is not in this province of the drama that the strength and mastery of Shakspeare lay, so I shall not undertake the tedious and ill-natured trouble to point out the several faults he was guilty of in it. His tales were seldom invented, but rather taken either from the true history, or novels and romances: and he commonly made use of them in that order, with those incidents, and that extent of time in which he found them in the authors from whence he borrowed them. So *the Winter's Tale*, which is taken from an old book, called *the Delectable History of Dorastus and Fawnia*, contains the space of sixteen or seventeen years, and the scene is sometimes laid in Bohemia, and sometimes in Sicily, according to the original order of the story. Almost all his historical plays comprehend a great length of time, and very different and distinct places: and in his *Antony and Cleopatra*, the scene travels over the greatest part of the Roman empire. But in recompence for his carelessness in this point, when he comes to another part of the drama, *the manners of his characters, in acting or speaking what is proper for them, and fit to be shewn by the poet*, he may be generally justified, and in very many places greatly commended. For those plays which he has taken from the English or Roman history, let any man compare them, and he will find the character as exact in the poet as the historian. He seems indeed so far from proposing to himself any one action for a subject, that the title very often tells you, it is *The Life of King John, King Richard, &c.* What can be more agreeable to the idea our historians give of

Henry the Sixth, than the picture Shakspeare has drawn of him! His manners are every where exactly the same with the story; one finds him still described with simplicity, passive sanctity, want of courage, weakness of mind, and easy submission to the governance of an imperious wife, or prevailing faction: though at the same time the poet does justice to his good qualities, and moves the pity of his audience for him, by shewing him pious, disinterested, a contemner of the things of this world, and wholly resigned to the severest dispensations of God's providence. There is a short scene in the *Second Part of Henry the Sixth*, which I cannot but think admirable in its kind. Cardinal Beaufort, who had murdered the Duke of Gloucester, is shewn in the last agonies on his death-bed, with the good king praying over him. There is so much terror in one, so much tenderness and moving piety in the other, as must touch any one who is capable either of fear or pity. In his *Henry the Eighth*, that prince is drawn with that greatness of mind, and all those good qualities which are attributed to him in any account of his reign. If his faults are not shewn in an equal degree, and the shades in this picture do not bear a just proportion to the lights, it is not that the artist wanted either colours or skill in the disposition of them; but the truth, I believe, might be, that he forbore doing it out of regard to queen Elizabeth, since it could have been no very great respect to the memory of his mistress, to have exposed some certain parts of her father's life upon the stage. He has dealt much more freely with the minister of that great king; and certainly nothing was ever more justly written, than the character of Cardinal Wolsey. He has shewn him insolent in his prosperity; and yet, by a wonderful address, he makes his fall and ruin the subject of general compassion. The whole man, with his vices and virtues, is finely and exactly described in the second scene of the fourth act. The distresses likewise of Queen Catharine, in this play, are very movingly touched; and though the art of the poet has screened

King Henry from any gross imputation of injustice, yet one is inclined to wish, the Queen had met with a fortune more worthy of her birth and virtue. Nor are the manners, proper to the persons represented, less justly observed, in those characters taken from the Roman history; and of this, the fierceness and impatience of Coriolanus, his courage and disdain of the common people, the virtue and philosophical temper of Brutus, and the irregular greatness of mind in M. Antony, are beautiful proofs. For the two last especially, you find them exactly as they are described by Plutarch, from whom certainly Shakspeare copied them. He has indeed followed his original pretty close, and taken in several little incidents that might have been spared in a play. But, as I hinted before, his design seems most commonly rather to describe those great men in the several fortunes and accidents of their lives, than to take any single great action, and form his work simply upon that. However, there are some of his pieces, where the fable is founded upon one action only. Such are more especially, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hamlet*, and *Othello*. The design in *Romeo and Juliet* is plainly the punishment of their two families, for the unreasonable feuds and animosities that had been so long kept up between them, and occasioned the effusion of so much blood. In the management of this story, he has shewn something wonderfully tender and passionate in the love-part, and very pitiful in the distress. *Hamlet* is founded on much the same tale with the *Electra* of *Sophocles*. In each of them a young prince is engaged to revenge the death of his father, their mothers are equally guilty, are both concerned in the murder of their husbands*, and are afterwards married to the murderers. There is in the first part of the Greek tragedy something very moving in the grief of *Electra*; but, as Mr. Dacier has observed, there

* — are both concerned in the murder of their husbands,] It does not appear that *Hamlet's* mother was concerned in the death of her husband. MALONE.

is something very unnatural and shocking in the manners he has given that Princess and Orestes in the latter part. Orestes imbrues his hands in the blood of his own mother; and that barbarous action is performed, though not immediately upon the stage, yet so near, that the audience hear Clytemnestra crying out to Ægylthus for help, and to her son for mercy: while Electra her daughter, and a Princess, (both of them characters that ought to have appeared with more decency,) stands upon the stage, and encourages her brother in the parricide. What horror does this not raise! Clytemnestra was a wicked woman, and had deserved to die; nay, in the truth of the story, she was killed by her own son; but to represent an action of this kind on the stage, is certainly an offence against those rules of manners proper to the persons, that ought to be observed there. On the contrary, let us only look a little on the conduct of Shakspeare. Hamlet is represented with the same piety towards his father, and resolution to revenge his death, as Orestes; he has the same abhorrence for his mother's guilt, which, to provoke him the more, is heightened by incest: but it is with wonderful art and justness of judgment, that the poet restrains him from doing violence to his mother. To prevent any thing of that kind, he makes his father's Ghost forbid that part of his vengeance:

*But howsoever thou pursu'st this act,
Taint not thy mind, nor let thy soul contrive
Against thy mother aught; leave her to heav'n,
And to those thorns that in her bosom lodge,
To prick and sting her.*

This is to distinguish rightly between *horror* and *terror*. The latter is a proper passion of tragedy, but the former ought always to be carefully avoided. And certainly no dramatick writer ever succeeded better in raising *terror* in the minds of an audience than Shakspeare has done. The whole tragedy of *Macbeth*, but more especially the scene where the King is murdered, in the second act, as well

254 SOME ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE, &c.

well as this play, is a noble proof of that manly spirit with which he writ; and both shew how powerful he was, in giving the strongest motions to our souls that they are capable of. I cannot leave *Hamlet*, without taking notice of the advantage with which we have seen this master-piece of Shakspeare distinguish itself upon the stage, by Mr. Betterton's fine performance of that part. A man, who, though he had no other good qualities, as he has a great many, must have made his way into the esteem of all men of letters, by this only excellency. No man is better acquainted with Shakspeare's manner of expression, and indeed he has studied him so well, and is so much a master of him, that whatever part of his he performs, he does it as if it had been written on purpose for him, and that the author had exactly conceived it as he plays it. I must own a particular obligation to him, for the most considerable part of the passages relating to this life, which I have here transmitted to the publick; his veneration for the memory of Shakspeare having engaged him to make a journey into Warwickshire, on purpose to gather up what remains he could, of a name for which he had so great a veneration⁷.

⁷ — *of a name for which he had so great a veneration.*] Mr. Betterton was born in 1635, and had many opportunities of collecting information relative to Shakspeare, but unfortunately the age in which he lived was not an age of curiosity. Had either he or Dryden or Sir William D' Avenant taken the trouble to visit our poet's youngest daughter, who lived till 1662, or his grand-daughter, who did not die till 1670, many particulars might have been preserved which are now irrecoverably lost. Shakspeare's sister, Joan Hart, who was only five years younger than him, died at Stratford in Nov. 1646, at the age of seventy six; and from her undoubtedly his two daughters, and his grand-daughter Lady Barnard, had learned several circumstances of his early history antecedent to the year 1600. MALONE.

This *Account of the Life of Shakspeare* is printed from Mr. Rowe's second edition, in which it had been abridged and altered by himself after its appearance in 1709. STEEVENS.

To the foregoing Accounts of SHAKSPEARE'S LIFE, I have only one Passage to add, which Mr. Pope related, as communicated to him by Mr. Rowe.

IN the time of Elizabeth, coaches being yet uncommon, and hired coaches not at all in use, those who were too proud, too tender, or too idle to walk, went on horseback to any distant business or diversion. Many came on horseback to the play¹, and when Shakspeare fled to London from the terror of a criminal prosecution, his first expedient was to wait at the door of the play-house, and hold the horses of those that had no servants, that they might be ready again after the performance. In this office he became so conspicuous for his care and readiness, that in a short time every man as he alighted called for Will. Shakspeare, and scarcely any other waiter was trusted with a horse while Will. Shakspeare could be had. This was the first dawn of better fortune. Shakspeare, finding more horses put into his hand than he could hold, hired boys to wait under his inspection, who, when Will. Shakspeare was summoned, were immediately to present themselves, *I am Shakspeare's boy, Sir.* In time Shakspeare found higher employment; but as long as the practice of riding to the play-house continued, the waiters that held the horses retained the appellation of, *Shakspeare's boys*². JOHNSON.

Mr.

¹ *Many came on horseback to the play,*] Plays were at this time performed in the afternoon. "The pollicie of plaies is very necessary, howsoever some shallow-brained censurers (not the deepest searchers into the secrets of government) mightily oppugne them. For whereas *the afternoon* being the idlest time of the day wherein men that are their own masters (as gentlemen of the court, the innes of the court, and a number of captains and soldiers about London) do wholly bestow themselves upon pleasure, and that pleasure they divide (how virtuously it skills not) either in gaming, following of harlots, drinking, or seeing a play, is it not better (since of four extreames all the world cannot keepe them but they will choose one) that they should betake them to the least, which is plaies?" Nash's *Pierce Pennilesse his Supplication to the Devil*, 1592. STEEVENS.

² — *the waiters that hold the horses retained the appellation of Shakspeare's boys.*] I cannot dismiss this anecdote without observing that it seems

Mr. Rowe has told us that he derived the principal anecdotes in his account of Shakspeare, from Betterton the

seems to want every mark of probability. Though Shakspeare quitted Stratford on account of a juvenile irregularity, we have no reason to suppose that he had forfeited the protection of his father who was engaged in a lucrative business, or the love of his wife who had already brought him two children, and was herself the daughter of a substantial yeoman. It is unlikely therefore, when he was beyond the reach of his prosecutor, that he should conceal his plan of life, or place of residence, from those who, if he found himself distressed, could not fail to afford him such supplies as would have set him above the necessity of *holding horses* for subsistence. Mr. Malone has remarked in his *Attempt to ascertain the Order in which the Plays of Shakspeare were written*, that he might have found an easy introduction to the stage; for Thomas Green, a celebrated comedian of that period, was his townsman, and perhaps his relation. The genius of our author prompted him to write poetry; his connection with a player might have given his productions a dramatick turn; or his own sagacity might have taught him that fame was not incompatible with profit, and that the theatre was an avenue to both. That it was once the custom to ride on horseback to the play, I am likewise yet to learn. The most popular of the theatres were on the Bank-side; and we are told by the satirical pamphleteers of the time, that the usual mode of conveyance to these places of amusement, was by water: but not a single writer so much as hints at the custom of riding to them, or at the practice of having horses held during the hours of exhibition. Some allusion to this usage (if it had existed) must, I think, have been discovered in the course of our researches after contemporary fashions. Let it be remembered too, that we receive this tale on no higher authority than that of Cibber's *Lives of the Poets*, Vol. I. p. 130. "Sir William Davenant told it to Mr. Betterton, who communicated it to Mr. Rowe." who (according to Dr. Johnson) related it to Mr. Pope. Mr. Rowe (if this intelligence be authentick) seems to have concurred with me in opinion, as he forebore to introduce a circumstance so incredible into his *Life of Shakspeare*. As to the book which furnishes the anecdote, not the smallest part of it was the composition of Dr. Cibber, being entirely written by a Mr. Shiells, amanuensis to Dr. Johnson, when his *Dictionary* was preparing for the press. T. Cibber was in the King's Bench, and accepted of ten guineas from the booksellers for leave to prefix his name to the work; and it was purposely so prefixed as to leave the reader in doubt whether himself or his father was the person designed. STEEVENS.

Mr. Steevens in one particular is certainly mistaken. To the theatre in Blackfriars I have no doubt that many gentlemen rode in the time of Queen Elizabeth and K. James I. From the Strand, Holborn,

the player, whose zeal had induced him to visit Stratford for the sake of procuring all possible intelligence concerning a poet to whose works he might justly think himself under the strongest obligations. Notwithstanding this assertion, in the manuscript papers of the late Mr. Oldys it is said, that one Boman (according to Chetwood, p. 143, "an actor more than half an age on the London theatres") was unwilling to allow that his associate and contemporary Betterton had ever undertaken such a journey*. Be this matter as it will, the following particulars, which I shall give in the words of Oldys, are, for aught we know to the contrary, as well authenticated as any of the anecdotes delivered down to us by Rowe.

Holborn, Bishopsgate-street, &c. where many of the nobility lived, they could indeed go no other way than on foot, or on horseback, or in coaches; and coaches till after the death of Elizabeth were extremely rare. Many of the gentry therefore certainly went to that play-house on horseback. See the proofs, in the Essay above referred to.

This however will not establish the tradition relative to our authour's first employment at the play-house, which stands on a very slender foundation. MALONE.

* —it is said that one Boman—was unwilling to believe that his associate and contemporary Betterton had ever undertaken such a journey.] This assertion of Mr. Oldys is altogether unworthy of credit. Why any doubt should be entertained concerning Mr. Betterton's having visited Stratford, after Rowe's positive assertion that he did so, it is not easy to conceive. Mr. Rowe did not go there himself; and how could he have collected the few circumstances relative to Shakspeare and his family, which he has told, if he had not obtained information from some friend who examined the Register of the parish of Stratford, and made personal inquiries on the subject?

"Boman," we are told, "was unwilling to believe," &c. But the fact disputed did not require any exercise of his belief. Mr. Boman was married to the daughter of Sir Francis Watson, Bart. the gentleman with whom Betterton joined in an adventure to the East Indies, whose name the writer of Betterton's Life in *Biographia Britannica* has so studiously concealed. By that unfortunate scheme Betterton lost above 2000l. Dr. Ratcliffe 6000l. and Sir Francis Watson his whole fortune. On his death soon after the year 1692, Betterton generously took his daughter under his protection, and educated her in his house. Here Boman married her; from which period he continued to live in the most friendly correspondence with Mr. Betterton, and must have known whether he went to Stratford or not.

MALONE.

Mr.

158 ADDITIONAL ANECDOTES

Mr. Oldys had covered several quires of paper with laborious collections for a regular life of our author. From these I have made the following extracts, which (however trivial) contain the only circumstances that wear the least appearance of novelty or information; the song in p. 106, excepted.

“ If tradition may be trusted, Shakspeare often baited at the Crown Inn or Tavern in Oxford, in his journey to and from London. The landlady was a woman of great beauty and sprightly wit; and her husband, Mr. John Davenant, (afterwards mayor of that city) a grave melancholy man; who, as well as his wife, used much to delight in Shakspeare’s pleasant company. Their son young Will Davenant (afterwards Sir William) was then a little school-boy in the town, of about seven or eight years old³, and so fond also of Shakspeare, that whenever he heard of his arrival, he would fly from school to see him. One day an old townsman observing the boy running homeward almost out of breath, asked him whither he was posting in that heat and hurry. He answered, to see his *god-father* Shakspeare. There’s a good boy, said the other, but have a care that you don’t take *God’s* name in vain. This story Mr. Pope told me at the Earl of Oxford’s table, upon occasion of some discourse which arose about Shakspeare’s monument then newly erected in Westminster Abbey⁴; and he quoted Mr.

³ — *of about seven or eight years old,*] He was born at Oxford in February, 1605-6. MALONE.

⁴ — Shakspeare’s monument then newly erected in Westminster Abbey;] “ This monument,” says Mr. Granger, “ was erected in 1741, by the direction of the Earl of Burlington, Dr. Mead, Mr. Pope, and Mr. Martin. Mr. Fleetwood and Mr. Rich gave each of them a benefit towards it, from one of Shakspeare’s own plays. It was executed by H. Scheemaker, after a design of Kent.

“ On the monument is inscribed—*amor publicus posuit*. Dr. Mead objected to *amor publicus*, as not occurring in old classical inscriptions; but Mr. Pope and the other gentlemen concerned insisting that it should stand, Dr. Mead yielded the point, saying,

Omnia vincit amor, et nos cedamus amori.

“ This

Mr. Betterton the player for his authority. I answered that I thought such a story might have enriched the variety of those choice fruits of observation he has presented us in his preface to the edition he had published of our poet's works. He replied—"There might be in the garden of mankind such plants as would seem to pride themselves more in a regular production of their own

"This anecdote was communicated by Mr. Lort, late Greek Professor of Cambridge, who had it from Dr. Mead himself."

It was recorded at the time in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for Feb. 1741, by a writer who objects to every part of the inscription, and says it ought to have been, "G. S. centum viginti et quatuor post obitum annis populus plaudens [aut favens] posuit."

The monument was opened Jan. 29, 1741. Scheemaker is said to have got 300*l.* for his work. The performers at each house, much to their honour, performed *gratis*; and the dean and chapter of Westminster took nothing for the ground. The money received by the performance at Drury-Lane, amounted to above 200*l.* the receipts at Covent-Garden to about 100*l.* These particulars I learn from Oldys's *MS.* notes on Langbaine.

The scroll on the monument, as I learn from a letter to my father, dated June 27, 1741, remained for some time after the monument was set up, without any inscription on it. This was a challenge to the wits of the time; which one of them accepted by writing a copy of verses, the subject of which was a conversation supposed to pass between Dr. Mead and Sir Thomas Hanmer, relative to the filling up of the scroll. I know not whether they are in print, and I do not choose to quote them all. The introductory lines, however, run thus:

"To learned-Mead thus Hanmer spoke:

"Doctor, this empty scroll's a joke.

"Something it doubtless should contain,

"Extremely short, extremely plain;

"But wondrous deep, and wondrous pat,

"And fit for Shakspeare to point at;" &c. MALONE.

At Drury-Lane was acted *Julius Cæsar*, 28th April 1738, when a prologue written by Benjamin Martin, Esq. was spoken by Mr. Quin, and an Epilogue by James Noel, Esq. spoken by Mrs. Porter. Both these are printed in the *General Dictionary*. At Covent-Garden was acted *Hamlet*, 10th April 1739, when a prologue written by Mr. Theobald, and printed in the *London Magazine* of that year, was spoken by Ryan. In the newspaper of the day it was observed that this last representation was far from being numerously attended.

REED.
native

native fruits, than in having the repute of bearing a richer kind by grafting; and this was the reason he omitted it⁵."

The same story, without the names of the persons, is printed among the jests of John Taylor the Water poet, in his works, folio, 1630, page 184, N^o 39: and, with some variations, may be found in one of Hearne's pocket books⁶.

" One

⁵ — *and this was the reason he omitted it.*] Mr. Oldys might have added, that *he* was the person who suggested to Mr. Pope the singular course which he pursued in his edition of Shakspeare. "Remember" (says Oldys in a M^s. note to his copy of Langbaine, Article, *Shakspeare*,) "what I observed to my Lord Oxford for Mr. Pope's use, out of Cowley's preface." The observation here alluded to, I believe, is one made by Cowley in his preface, p. 53. edit. 1710, 8vo. "This has been the case with Shakspeare, Fletcher, Jonson, and many others, part of whose poems I should take the boldness to *prune and lop away*, if the care of *replanting them in print* did belong to me; neither would I make any scruple to cut off from some the unnecessary young suckers, and from others the old withered branches; for a great wit is no more tied to live in a vast volume, than in a gigantick body; on the contrary it is commonly more vigorous the less space it animates, and as Statius says of little Tydeus,

———— totos infusa per artus,
Major in exiguo regnabat corpore virtus."

Pope adopted this very unwarrantable idea; striking out from the text of his authour whatever he did not like: and Cowley himself has suffered a sort of poetical punishment for having suggested it, the learned bishop of Worcester [Dr. Hurd] having *pruned and lopped away* his beautiful luxuriances, as Pope, on Cowley's suggestion, did those of Shakspeare. MALONE.

⁶ *The same story—may be found in one of Hearne's pocket books.*] Antony Wood is the first and original author of the anecdote that Shakspeare, in his journies from Warwickshire to London, used to bait at the Crown-inn on the west side of the corn market in Oxford. He says, that Davenant the poet was born in that house in 1606. "His father (he adds) John Davenant, was a sufficient vintner, kept the tavern now known by the sign of the *Crown*, and was mayor of the said city in 1621. His mother was a very beautiful woman, of a good wit and conversation, in which she was imitated by none of her children but by this *William* [the poet]. The father, who was a very grave and discreet citizen, (yet an admirer and lover of plays and play-makers, especially *Shakspeare*, who frequented his

" house

“ One of Shakspeare’s younger brothers⁷, who lived to a good old age, even some years, as I compute, after the

house in his journies between Warwickshire and London) was of a melancholick disposition, and was seldom or never seen to laugh, in which he was imitated by none of his children but by Robert his eldest son, afterwards fellow of St. John’s college, and a venerable Doctor of Divinity.” *Wood’s Atb. Oxon.* Vol. II. p. 292. edit. 1692. I will not suppose that Shakspeare could have been the father of a Doctor of Divinity who never laughed: but it was always a constant tradition in Oxford that Shakspeare was the father of Davenant the poet. And I have seen this circumstance expressly mentioned in some of Wood’s papers. Wood was well qualified to know these particulars; for he was a townsman of Oxford, where he was born in 1632. Wood says, that Davenant went to school in Oxford. *Ubi supr.*

As to the *Crown-Inn*, it still remains as an inn, and is an old decayed house, but probably was once a principal inn in Oxford. It is directly in the road from Stratford to London. In a large upper room, which seems to have been a sort of *Hall* for entertaining a large company, or for accommodating (as was the custom) different parties at once, there was a bow-window, with three pieces of excellent painted glass. About eight years ago, I remember visiting this room, and proposing to purchase of the landlord the painted glass, which would have been a curiosity as coming from Shakspeare’s inn. But going thither soon after, I found it was removed; the inn-keeper having communicated my intended bargain to the owner of the house, who began to suspect that he was possessed of a curiosity too valuable to be parted with, or to remain in such a place: and I never could hear of it afterwards. If I remember right, the painted glass consisted of three armorial shields beautifully stained. I have said so much on this subject, because I think that Shakspeare’s old hostelry at Oxford deserves no less respect than Chaucer’s Tabarde in Southwark. T. WARTON.

⁷ *One of Shakspeare’s younger brothers, &c.*] Mr. Oldys seems to have studied the art of “marring a plain tale in the telling of it;” for he has in this story introduced circumstances which tend to diminish, instead of adding to, its credibility. *Male dum recitas, incipit esse tuum.* From Shakspeare’s not taking notice of any of his brothers or sisters in his will, except Joan Hart, I think it highly probable they were all dead in 1616, except her, at least all those of the whole blood; though in the Register there is no entry of the burial of either his brother Gilbert, or Edmund, antecedent to the death of Shakspeare, or at any subsequent period.

The truth is, that this account of our poet’s having performed the part of an old man in one of his own comedies, came originally from

the restoration of *King Charles II.* would in his younger days come to London to visit his brother *Will*, as he called him, and be a spectator of him as an actor in some of his own plays. This custom, as his brother's fame enlarged, and his dramattick entertainments grew the greatest support of our principal, if not of all our theatres, he continued it seems so long after his brother's death, as even to the latter end of his own life. The curiosity at this time of the most noted actors [exciting them] to learn something from him of his brother, &c. they justly held him in the highest veneration. And it may be well believed, as there was besides a kinsman and descendant of the family, who was then a celebrated actor among them, [*Charles Hart*^s. See Shakspeare's *Will*.] this opportunity made them greedily inquisitive

Mr. Thomas Jones of Tarbick, in Worcestershire, who has been already mentioned, (see p. 106, n. 5.) and who related it from the information, not of one of Shakspeare's *brothers*, but of a *relation* of our poet, who lived to a good old age, and who had seen him act in his youth. Mr. Jones's informer might have been Mr. Richard Quiney, who lived in London, and died at Stratford in 1656, at the age of 69; or Mr. Thomas Quiney, our poet's son-in-law, who lived, I believe, till 1663, and was twenty-seven years old when his father-in-law died; or some one of the family of Hathaway. Mr. Thomas Hathaway, I believe Shakspeare's brother-in-law, died at Stratford in 1654-5, at the age of 85.

There was a Thomas Jones an inhabitant of Stratford, who between the years 1581 and 1590 had four sons, Henry, James, Edmund, and Isaac: some one of these, it is probable, settled at Tarbick, and was the father of Thomas Jones, the relater of this anecdote, who was born about the year 1613.

If any of Shakspeare's brothers lived till after the Restoration, and visited the players, why were we not informed to what player he related it, and from what player Mr. Oldys had his account? The fact, I believe, is, he had it not from a player, but from the above-mentioned Mr. Jones, who likewise communicated the stanza of the ballad on Sir Thomas Lucy, which has been printed in a former page. MALONE.

^s — [*Charles Hart*.] Mr. Charles Hart the player was born, I believe, about the year 1630, and died in 1685. If he was a grandson of Shakspeare's sister, he was probably the son of Michael Hart, her youngest son, of whose marriage or death there is no account in the parish Register of Stratford, and therefore I suspect he settled in London. MALONE.

into

into every little circumstance, more especially in his dramattick character, which his brother could relate of him. But he, it seems, was so stricken in years, and possibly his memory so weakened with infirmities, (which might make him the easier pass for a man of weak intellects,) that he could give them but little light into their inquiries; and all that could be recollected from him of his brother *Will* in that station was, the faint, general, and almost lost ideas he had of having once seen him act a part in one of his own comedies, wherein being to personate a decrepit old man, he wore a long beard, and appeared so weak and drooping and unable to walk, that he was forced to be supported and carried by another person to a table, at which he was seated among some company, who were eating, and one of them sung a song." See the character of *Adam* in *As you like it*, Act II. sc. ult.

"Verses by Ben Jonson and Shakspeare, occasioned by the motto to the Globe Theatre—*Totus mundus agit histrionem*.

Jonson.

If, but *stage actors*, all the world displays,
Where shall we find *spectators* of their plays?

Shakspeare.

Little, or much, of what we see, we do;
We are all both *actors* and *spectators* too.

Poetical Characteristicks, 8vo. MS. Vol. I. some time in the Harleian Library; which volume was returned to its owner."

"Old Mr. Boman the player reported from Sir William Bishop, that some part of Sir John Falstaff's character was drawn from a townsman of Stratford, who either faithlessly broke a contract, or spitefully refused to part with some land, for a valuable

consideration, adjoining to Shakspeare's, in or near that town."

To these anecdotes I can only add the following.

At the conclusion of the advertisement prefixed to Lintot's edition of Shakspeare's poems, it is said, "That most learned prince and great patron of learning, King James the First, was pleased with his own hand to write an amicable letter to Mr. Shakspeare; which letter, though now lost, remained long in the hands of Sir William D'Avenant², as a credible person now living can testify."

Mr. Oldys, in a MS. note to his copy of Fuller's *Worthies*, observes, that "the story came from the duke of Buckingham, who had it from Sir William D'Avenant."

It appears from *Roscius Anglicanus*, (commonly called Downes the prompter's book) 1708, that Shakspeare took the pains to instruct Joseph Taylor in the character of *Hamlet*, and John Lowine in that of *K. Henry VIII.*

STEEVENS.

Extract from the Rev. Dr. Farmer's *Essay on the Learning of Shakspeare*, small 8vo. 1767.

In 1751, was reprinted "A compendious or brief examination of certayne ordinary complaints of divers of our Countrymen in these our days: which although they are in some parte unjust and friuolous, yet are they all by way of dialogue thoroughly debated and discussed by *William Shakspeare*, Gentleman." 8vo.

This extraordinary piece was originally published in 4to, 1581, and dedicated by the author, "To the most

2 — which letter, though now lost, remained long in the hands of Sir William D'Avenant.] Dr. Farmer with great probability supposes that this letter was written by King James in return for the compliment paid to him in *Macbeth*. The relater of this anecdote was *Stafford Duke of Buckingham*. MALONE.

vertuous

vertuous and learned Lady, his most deare and soveraigne Princeesse, *Elizabeth*; being inforced by her majesties late and singular clemency in pardoning certayne his unduetifull misdemeanour." And by the modern editors, to the late king; as "a treatise composed by the most extensive and fertile genius that ever any age or nation produced."

Here we join issue with the writers of that excellent, though very unequal work, *Biographia Britannica*: if, say they, this piece could be written by our poet, it would be absolutely decisive in the dispute about his learning; for many quotations appear in it from the Greek and Latin classicks.

The concurring circumstances of the *name*, and the *misdemeanor*, which is supposed to be the old story of *deer-stealing*, seem fairly to challenge our poet for the author: but they hesitate.—His claim may appear to be confuted by the date 1581, when *Shakspeare* was only *seventeen*, and the *long* experience, which the writer talks of.—But I will not keep the reader in suspense: the book was *not* written by *Shakspeare*.

Strype, in his *Annals*, calls the author *SOME learned man*, and this gave me the first suspicion. I knew very well, that honest *John* (to use the language of *Sir Thomas Bodley*) did not waste his time with such *baggage books* as *plays* and *poems*; yet I must suppose, that he had *heard* of the name of *Shakspeare*. After a while I met with the original edition. Here in the title-page, and at the end of the dedication, appear only the initials, *W. S. gent.* and presently I was informed by *Anthony Wood*, that the book in question was written, not by *William Shakspeare*, but by *William Stafford*, gentleman³: which at once accounted for the *misdemeanour* in

³ — *that the book in question was written, not by William Shakspeare, but by William Stafford, gentleman:*] *Fassi.* 2d. Edit. V. i. 208.—It will be seen on turning to the former edition, that the latter part of the paragraph belongs to another *Stafford*.—I have since observed, that *Wood* is not the first, who hath given us the true author of the pamphlet. FARMER.

the dedication. For *Stafford* had been concerned at that time, and was indeed afterward, as *Camden* and the other annalists inform us, with some of the conspirators against *Elizabeth*; which he properly calls his *unduetiful* behaviour.

I hope by this time, that any one open to conviction may be nearly satisfied; and I will promise to give on this head very little more trouble.

The justly celebrated Mr. Warton hath favoured us, in his *Life of Dr. Bathurst*, with some *bearsay* particulars concerning Shakspeare from the papers of Aubrey, which had been in the hands of Wood; and I ought not to suppress them, as the *last* seems to make against my doctrine. They came originally, I find, on consulting the MS. from one Mr. Beeston: and I am sure Mr. Warton, whom I have the honour to call my friend, and an associate in the question, will be in no pain about their credit.

“ William Shakspeare’s father was a butcher;—while he was a boy he exercised his father’s trade, but when he killed a calf, he would do it in a high style, and make a speech. This William being inclined *naturally* to poetry and acting, came to London, I guess, about *eighteen*, and was an actor in one of the playhouses, and did act *exceedingly well*. He began *early* to make essays in dramatique poetry.—The humour of the *Constable* in the *Midsummer-Night’s Dream* he happen’d to take at Crendon² in Bucks.—I think, I have been told, that he left near three hundred pounds to a *sister*. He understood *Latin* pretty well, FOR he had been in his younger years a *schoolmaster* in the country.”

² The humour of the *Constable* in the *Midsummer-Night’s Dream* he happen’d to take at Crendon—] This place is not met with in *Spelman’s Villare*, or in *Adam’s Index*; nor in the *first* and the *last* performance of this sort, *Speed’s Tables*, and *Whatley’s Gazetteer*: perhaps, however, it may be meant under the name of *Crandon*;—but the inquiry is of no importance.—It should, I think, be written *Crendon*; though better antiquaries than *Aubrey* have acquiesced in the vulgar corruption. FARMER.

I will

I will be short in my animadversions; and take them in their order.

The account of the *trade* of the family is not only contrary to all other tradition, but, as it may seem, to the instrument from the Herald's-office, so frequently reprinted.—Shakspeare most certainly went to London, and commenced actor through necessity, not natural inclination.—Nor have we any reason to suppose, that he did act *exceedingly well*. Rowe tells us from the information of Betterton, who was inquisitive into this point, and had very early opportunities of enquiry from Sir W. D'Avenant, that he was no *extraordinary actor*; and that the top of his performance was the Ghost in his own *Hamlet*. Yet this *chef d'oeuvre* did not please: I will give you an original stroke at it. Dr. Lodge, who was for ever pestering the town with pamphlets, published in the year 1596, *Wits Miserie, and the Worlds Madnesse, discovering the Devils incarnat of this Age*, 4to. One of these devils is *Hate-virtue, or Sorrow for another man's good successe*, who, says the doctor, is “a *foule lubber*, and looks as pale as the visard of the *Ghost*, which cried so miserably at the theatre, like an oister-wife, *Hamlet, revenge*³.” Thus you see Mr. Holt's supposed

³ —like an oister-wife, Hamlet, revenge.] To this observation of Dr. Farmer it may be added, that the play of *Hamlet* was better known by this scene, than by any other. In *Decker's Satiromastix*, 1602, the following passage occurs.

Asinius.

“Would I were hang'd if I can call you any names but captain, and *Tucca*.”

Tucca.

“No, fye; my name's *Hamlet Revenge*; thou hast been at Paris-Garden, hast thou not?”

Again, in *Westward Ho*, by Decker and Webster, 1607:

“Let these husbands play *mad Hamlet*, and cry, *revenge*!”

STEEVENS.

Dr. Farmer's observation may be further confirmed by the following passage in an anonymous play, called *A Warning for faire Women*, 1599. We also learn from it the usual dress of the stage ghosts of that time.

posed proof, in the appendix to the late edition, that *Hamlet* was written after 1597, or perhaps 1602, will by no means hold good; whatever might be the case of the particular passage on which it is founded.

Nor does it appear, that Shakspeare did begin early to make *essays in dramatique poetry*: the *Arraignment of Paris*, 1584, which hath so often been ascribed to him on the credit of Kirkman and Winstanley⁴, was written by George Peele; and Shakspeare is not met with, even as an *assistant*, till at least seven years afterward⁵.—Nash in his epistle to the gentlemen students of both universities, prefixed to Greene's *Arcadia*, 4to. *black letter*, recommends his friend, Peele, “as the chiefe supporter of pleasance now living, the *Atlas* of poetrie, and *primus verborum artifex*: whose first increase, the *Arraignment of Paris*, might plead to their opinions his pregnant dexteritie of wit and manifold varietie of inuention⁶.”

In

“ — A filthie whining ghost,
 “ Lapt in some foule sheet, or a leather pilch,
 “ Comes screaming like a pigge half stickt,
 “ And cries *winditla—revenge, revenge.*”

The leathern pilch, I suppose, was a theatrical substitute for armour.

MALONE.

4 — on the credit of Kirkman and Winstanley,] These people, who were the *Curls* of the last age, ascribe likewise to our author those miserable performances, *Mucedorus*, and the *Merry Devil of Edmonton*.

FARMER.

5 — Shakspeare is not met with, even as an assistant, till at least seven years afterward.—] Mr. Pope asserts “The troublesome Raigne of King *John*,” in two parts, 1611, to have been written by Shakspeare and Rowley:—which edition is a mere copy of another in *black letter*, 1591. But I find his assertion is somewhat to be doubted: for the old edition hath no name of *author* at all; and that of 1611, the initials only, *W. Sb.* in the title-page. FARMER.

See the *Essay on the Order of Shakspeare's plays*, Article, *King John*.

MALONE.

6 — his pregnant dexteritie of wit and manifold varietie of inuention.] Peele seems to have been taken into the patronage of the Earl of Northumberland about 1593, to whom he dedicates in that year, “*The Honour of the Garter*, a poem grátulatorie—the *Firstling* consecrated to his noble name.”—“He was esteemed, says Anthony Wood,

In the next place, unfortunately, there is neither such a character as a *Constable* in the *Midsummer Night's Dream*: nor was the *three hundred pounds* legacy to a sister, but a daughter.

And to close the whole, it is not possible, according to Aubrey himself, that Shakspeare could have been *some years a schoolmaster in the country*: on which circumstance only the supposition of his learning is professedly founded. He was not surely *very young*, when he was employed to *kill calves*, and he commenced player about *eighteen*!—The truth is, that he left his father, for a wife, a year sooner; and had at least two children born at Stratford before he retired from thence to London. It is therefore sufficiently clear, that poor Anthony had too much reason for his character of Aubrey: we find it in his own account of his life, published by Hearne, which I would earnestly recommend to any hypochondriack:

“A pretender to antiquities, roving, magotie-headed, and sometimes little better than crated: and being ex-

Wood, a most noted poet, 1579; but when or where he died, I cannot tell, for *so it is*, and always *batb been*, that most POETS die *poor*, and consequently obscurely, and a hard matter it is to trace them to their graves. *Claruit 1599.* *Atb. Oxon.* Vol. I. p. 300.

We had lately in a periodical pamphlet, called, *The Theatrical Review*, a very curious letter under the name of George Peele, to one Master Henrie Marle; relative to a dispute between Shakspeare and Alleyn, which was compromised by Ben Jonson.—“I never longed for thy companye more than last night; we were all verrie merie at the Globe, when Ned Alleyn did not scruple to asfyrme pleasauntly to thy friende Will, that he had stolen hys speeche about the excellencie of acting in Hamlet hys tragedye, from conversaytions manifold, which had passed between them, and opinions gyven by Alleyn touchyng that subjecte. Shakspeare did not take this talk in good forte; but Jonson did put an ende to the stryfe wyth wittyelie saying, thys affaire needeth no contentione: you stole it from Ned no doubte: do not marvel: haue you not seene hym acte tymes out of number?”—This is pretended to be printed from the original MS. dated 1600; which agrees well enough with Wood's *Claruit*: but unluckily, Peele was dead at least two years before. “As Anacreon died by the *pot*, says Meres, so George Peele by the *pox*.” *Wis's Treasury*, 1598. p. 286.

FARMER,
ceedingly

ceedingly credulous, would stuff his many letters sent to A. W. with *folly* and misinformations." p. 577.
FARMER.

The late Mr. Thomas Osborne, bookseller, (whose exploits are celebrated by the author of the *Dunciad*) being ignorant in what form or language our *Paradise Lost* was written, employed one of his garretteers to render it from a French translation into English prose. Lest, hereafter, the compositions of Shakspeare should be brought back into their native tongue from the version of Monsieur le Comte de Catuelan, le Tourneur, &c. it may be necessary to observe, that all the following particulars, extracted from the preface of these gentlemen, are as little founded in truth as their description of the Jubilee at Stratford, which they have been taught to represent as an affair of general approbation and national concern.

They say, that Shakspeare came to London without a plan, and finding himself at the door of a theatre, instinctively stopped there, and offered himself to be a holder of horses:—that he was remarkable for his excellent performance of the Ghost in Hamlet:—that he borrowed nothing from preceding writers:—that all on a sudden he left the stage, and returned without eclat into his native county:—that his monument at Stratford is of copper:—that the courtiers of James I. paid several compliments to him which are still preserved:—that he relieved a widow, who, together with her numerous family, was involved in a ruinous lawsuit:—that his editors have restored many passages in his plays, by the assistance of the manuscripts he left behind him, &c. &c.

Let me not however forget the justice due to these ingenious Frenchmen, whose skill and fidelity in the execution of their very difficult undertaking, is only exceeded by such a display of candour as would serve to cover the imperfections of much less elegant and judicious writers. STEEVENS.

Baptisms, Marriages, and Burials of the Shakspeare family; transcribed from the Register-books of the Parish of Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire¹.

JONE², daughter of John Shakspeare, was baptized Sept. 15, 1558.

Margaret, daughter of John Shakspeare, was buried April 30, 1563.

WILLIAM, son of John Shakspeare, was baptized April 26, 1564³.

Johanna, daughter of Richard Hathaway, otherwise Gardiner, of Shottery⁴, was baptized May 9, 1566.

Gilbert, son of John Shakspeare, was baptized Oct. 13, 1566.

Jone⁵, daughter of John Shakspeare, was baptized April 15, 1569.

Anne,

¹ An inaccurate and very imperfect list of the baptisms, &c. of Shakspeare's family was transmitted by Mr. West about ten years ago to Mr. Steevens. The list now printed I have extracted with great care from the Registers of Stratford; and I trust, it will be found correct. MALONE.

² This lady Mr. West supposed to have married the ancestor of the Harts of Stratford; but he was certainly mistaken. She died probably in her infancy. The wife of Mr. Hart was undoubtedly the second Jone, mentioned below. Her son Michael was born in the latter end of the year 1608, at which time she was above thirty-nine years old. The elder Jone would then have been near fifty.

MALONE.

³ He was born three days before, April 23, 1564. MALONE.

⁴ This Richard Hathaway of Shottery was probably the father of *Anne Hathaway*, our poet's wife. There is no entry of her baptism, the Register not commencing till 1558, two years after she was born. Thomas, the son of this Richard Hathaway, was baptized at Stratford, April 12, 1569; John, another son, Feb. 3, 1574; and William, another son, Nov. 30, 1578. MALONE.

⁵ It was common in the age of Queen Elizabeth to give the same christian name to two children successively. (Thus, Mr. Sadler, who was godfather to Shakspeare's son, had two sons, who were baptized by the name of *John*. See note 6.) This was undoubtedly done in the present instance. The former Jone having probably died, (though I can find no entry of her burial in the Register, nor indeed

Anne, daughter of Mr. John Shakspeare, was baptized
Sept. 28, 1571.

Richard, son of Mr. John Shakspeare, was baptized March
11, 1573. [1573-4.]

Anne, daughter of Mr. John Shakspeare, was buried April
4, 1579.

Edmund, son of Mr. John Shakspeare, was baptized
May 3, 1580.

Sufanna, daughter of WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE, was
baptized May 26, 1583.

Elizabeth, daughter of Anthony Shakspeare, of Hamp-
ton*, was baptized Feb. 10, 1583. [1583-4.]

John Shakspeare and Margery Roberts were married
Nov. 25, 1584.

Hamnet⁶ and Judith, son and daughter of WILLIAM
SHAKSPEARE, were baptized February 2, 1584.
[1584-5.]

Margery,

of many of the other children of John Shakspeare) the name of Jone,
a very favourite one in those days, was transferred to another new-
born child. This latter Jone married Mr. William Hart, a hatter in
Stratford, some time, as I conjecture, in the year 1599, when she was
thirty years old; for her eldest son William was baptized there,
August 28, 1600. There is no entry of her marriage in the Register.

MALONE.

* There was also a Mr. Henry Shakspeare settled at Hampton-
Lucy, as appears from the Register of that parish:

1582—Lettice, daughter of Henry Shakspeare, was baptized.

1585—James, son of Henry Shakspeare, was baptized.

1589—James, son of Henry Shakspeare, was buried.

There was a Thomas Shakspeare settled at Warwick; for in the
Rolls-Chapel I found the inrolment of a deed made in the 44th year of
Queen Elizabeth, conveying "to Thomas Shakspeare of Warwick,
yeoman, Sachbroke, *alias* Bishop-Sachbroke, in Com. Warw."

MALONE.

⁶ Mr. West imagined that our poet's only son was christened by
the name of *Samuel*, but he was mistaken. Mr. Hamnet Sadler, who
was related, if I mistake not, to the Shakspeare family, appears to
have been sponzor for his son; and his wife, Mrs. Judith Sadler, to have
been godmother to Judith, the other twin-child. The name *Hamnet*
is written very distinctly both in the entry of the baptism and burial
of this child. *Hamnet* and *Hamlet* seem to have been considered as
the same name, and to have been used indiscriminately both in speak-
ing

STRATFORD REGISTER. 173

Margery, wife of John Shakspere, was buried Oct. 29, 1587.

Thomas⁷, son of Richard Queeny, was baptized Feb. 26, 1588. [1588-9.]

Ursula⁸, daughter of John Shakspere, was baptized March 11, 1588. [1588-9.]

Thomas,

ing and writing. Thus, this Mr. Hamnet Sadler, who is a witness to Shakspeare's Will, writes his christian name *Hamnet*; but the scrivener who drew up the will, writes it *Hamlet*. There is the same variation in the Register of Stratford, where the name is spelt in three or four different ways. Thus, among the baptisms we find, in 1591, "May 26, John, filius *Hamletti* Sadler;" and in 1583, "Sept. 13, Margaret, daughter to *Hamlet* Sadler." But in 1588, Sept. 20, we find "John, son to *Hamnet* Sadler;" in 1596, April 4, we have "Judith, filia *Hamnett* Sadler;" in 1597-8, "Feb. 3, Wilhelmus, filius *Hambnet* Sadler;" and in 1599, "April 23, Francis, filius *Hamnet* Sadler." This Mr. Sadler died in 1624, and the entry of his burial stands thus: "1624, Oct. 26, *Hamlet* Sadler." So also in that of his wife: "1613, March 23, Judith, uxor *Hamlet* Sadler."

The name of Hamlet occurs in several other entries in the Register. Oct. 4, 1576, "*Hamlet*, son to Humphry Holdar," was buried; and Sept. 28, 1564, "Catharina, uxor *Hamoleti* Hassal." Mr. *Hamlet* Smith, formerly of the borough of Stratford, is one of the benefactor's annually commemorated there.

Our poet's only son, Hamnet, died in 1596, in the twelfth year of his age. MALONE.

7 This gentleman married our poet's youngest daughter. He had three sisters, Elizabeth, Anne, and Mary, and five brothers; Adrian born in 1586, Richard born in 1587, William born in 1593, John in 1597, and George, born April 9, 1600. George was Curate of the parish of Stratford, and died of a consumption. He was buried there April 11, 1624. In Doctor Hall's pocket-book is the following entry relative to him. "38. Mr. Quiney, tussi gravi cum magna phlegmatis copia, et cibi vomitu, feb. lenta debilitatus," &c. The case concludes thus. "Anno seq. (no year is mentioned in the case, but the preceding case is dated 1624,) in hoc malum incidebat. Multa frustra tentata;—placide cum Domino dormit. Fuit boni indolis, et pro juveni omnifariam doctus." MALONE.

⁸ This Ursula, and her brothers, Humphrey, and Philip, appear to have been the children of John Shakspeare by Mary, his third wife, though no such marriage is entered in the Register. I have not been able to learn her surname, or in what church she was married. She died in Sept. 1608.

It

Thomas Greene, *alias* Shakspeare⁹, was buried March 6, 1589. [1589-90.]

Humphrey, son of John Shakspeare, was baptized May 24, 1590.

Philip, son of John Shakspeare, was baptized Sept. 21, 1591.

Thomas¹, son of Mr. Anthony Nash, was baptized June 20, 1593.

Hamnet, son of WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE, was buried Aug. 11, 1596.

It has been suggested to me that the John Shakspeare here mentioned was an elder brother of our poet, (not his father,) born, like Margaret Shakspeare, before the commencement of the Register: but had this been the case, he probably would have been called John *the younger*, old Mr. Shakspeare being alive in 1589. I am therefore of opinion that our poet's father was meant, and that he was thrice married. MALONE.

⁹ A great many names occur in this Register, with an *alias*, the meaning of which it is not very easy to ascertain. I should have supposed that the persons thus described were illegitimate, and that this Thomas Greene was the son of one of our poet's kinsmen, by a daughter of Thomas Greene, esq, a gentleman who resided in Stratford; but that in the register we frequently find the word *bastard* expressly added to the names of the children baptized. Perhaps this latter form was only used in the case of servants, labourers, &c. and the illegitimate offspring of the higher orders was more delicately denoted by an *alias*.

The Rev. Mr. Davenport observes to me that there are two families at present in Stratford, (and probably several more,) that are distinguished by an *alias*. "The real name of one of these families is *Roberts*, but they generally go by the name of *Burford*. The ancestor of the family came originally from Burford in Oxfordshire, and was frequently called from this circumstance by the name of Burford. This name has prevailed, and they are always now called by it; but they write their name, Roberts, *alias* Burford, and are so entered in the Register.

"The real name of the other family is Smith, but they are more known by the name of *Buck*. The ancestor of this family, from some circumstance or other, obtained the nickname of Buck, and they now write themselves, Smith, *alias* Buck." MALONE.

¹ This gentleman married our poet's grand-daughter, Elizabeth Hall. His father, Mr. Anthony Nash, lived at Welcombe, (where he had an estate,) as appears by the following entry of the baptism of another of his sons. "1598, Oct. 15, John, son to Mr. Anthony Nash, of *Welcombe*." MALONE.

William,

STRATFORD REGISTER. 175

William, son of William Hart, was baptized Aug. 28, 1600.

Mr. John Shakspeare was buried Sept. 8, 1601.

Mr. Richard Quiney², Bailiff of Stratford, was buried May 31, 1602.

Mary, daughter of William Hart, was baptized June 5, 1603.

Thomas, son of William Hart, latter, was baptized July 24, 1605.

John Hall, gentleman, and Sufanna Shakspere were married June 5, 1607.

Mary, daughter of William Hart, was buried Dec. 17, 1607.

Elizabeth, daughter of John Hall, gentleman, was baptized Feb. 21, 1607. [1607-8.]

Mary Shakspere, widow, was buried Sept. 9, 1608.

Michael, son of William Hart, was baptized Sept. 23, 1608.

Gilbert Shakspere, adolescens*, was buried Feb. 3, 1611. [1611-12.]

Richard Shakspere was buried Feb. 4, 1612. [1612-13.]

Thomas Queeny and Judith Shakspere³ were married Feb. 10, 1615. [1615-16.]

William

² This was the father of Mr. Thomas Quiney, who married Shakspeare's youngest daughter. MALONE.

* This was probably a son of Gilbert Shakspeare, our poet's brother. When the elder Gilbert died, the Register does not inform us; but he certainly died before his son. MALONE.

³ This lady, who was our poet's youngest daughter, appears to have married without her father's knowledge, for he mentions her in his will as unmarried. Mr. West, as I have already observed, was mistaken in supposing she was married in Feb. 1616, that is, in 1616-17. She was certainly married before her father's death. See a former note in p. 151, in which the entry is given exactly as it stands in the Register.

As Shakspeare the poet married his wife from Shottery, Mr. West conjectured he might have become possessed of a remarkable *house*, and jointly with his wife conveyed it as part of their daughter Judith's portion to Thomas Queeny. "It is certain," Mr. West adds, "that one Queeny, an elderly gentleman, sold it to — Harvey, esq. of Stockton, near Southam, Warwickshire, father of John Harvey Thurstby,

176 STRATFORD REGISTER.

William Hart, hatter⁴, was buried April 17, 1616.
WILLIAM SHAKSPERE⁵, gentleman, was buried
April 25⁶, 1616.

Shakspere, son of Thomas Quiney, gentleman, was baptized Nov. 23, 1616.

Shakspere, son of Thomas Quiney, gentleman, was buried May 8, 1617.

Richard, son of Thomas Quiney, was baptized Feb. 9, 1617. [1617-18.]

Thomas, son of Thomas Quiney, was baptized Aug. 29, 1619.

Anthony Nash, Esq⁷, was buried Nov. 18, 1622.

Mrs. Shakspere⁸ was buried Aug. 8, 1623.

Mr. Thomas Nash was married to Mrs. Elizabeth Hall, April 22, 1626.

Thomas^{*}, son of Thomas Hart, was baptized April 13, 1634.

Thursby, esq. of Abington, near Northampton; and that the afore-said Harvey sold it again to Samuel Tyler, esq. whose sisters, as his heirs, now enjoy it."

But how could Shakspere have conveyed this house, if he ever owned it, to Mr. Queeny, as a marriage portion with his daughter, concerning whom there is the following clause in his will, executed one month before his death: "Provided that if such husband as she *shall* at the end of the said three years be married unto," &c. MALONE.

⁴ This William Hart was our poet's brother-in-law. He died, it appears, a few days before Shakspere. MALONE.

⁵ He died, as appears from his monument, April 23d. MALONE.

⁶ No one hath protracted the life of *Shakspere* beyond 1616, except Mr. Hume; who is pleased to add a year to it, contrary to all manner of evidence. FARMER.

⁷ Father of Mr. Thomas Nash, the husband of Elizabeth Hall.

MALONE.

⁸ This lady, who was the poet's widow, and whose maiden name was Anne Hathaway, died, as appears from her tomb-stone (see p. 105, n. 4.) at the age of 67, and consequently was near eight years older than her husband. I have not been able to ascertain when or where they were married, but suspect the ceremony was performed at Hampton-Lucy, or Billesley, in August 1582. The register of the latter parish is lost. MALONE.

^{*} It appears from Lady Barnard's Will that this Thomas Hart was alive in 1669. The Register does not ascertain the time of his death, nor that of his father. MALONE.

Dr.

STRATFORD REGISTER. 177

Dr. John Hall⁹, ["*medicus peritissimus*,"] was buried
Nov. 26, 1635.

George, son of Thomas Hart, was baptized Sept. 18,
1636.

Thomas, son of Thomas Quiney, was buried Jan. 28,
1638. [1638-9.]

Richard, son of Thomas Quiney, was buried Feb. 26,
1638. [1638-9.]

William Hart¹ was buried March 29, 1639.

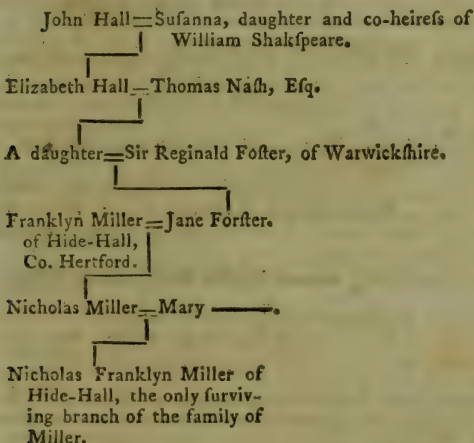
Mary, daughter of Thomas Hart, was baptized June 18,
1641.

Joan Hart, widow, was buried Nov. 4, 1646.

Thomas Nash, Esq. was buried April 5, 1647.

Mrs. Sufanna Hall, widow, was buried July 16, 1649.
Mr.

⁹ It has been supposed that the family of Miller of Hide-Hall in the county of Herts, were descended from Dr. Hall's daughter Elizabeth; and to prove this fact, the following pedigree was transmitted some years ago by Mr. Whalley to Mr. Steevens:

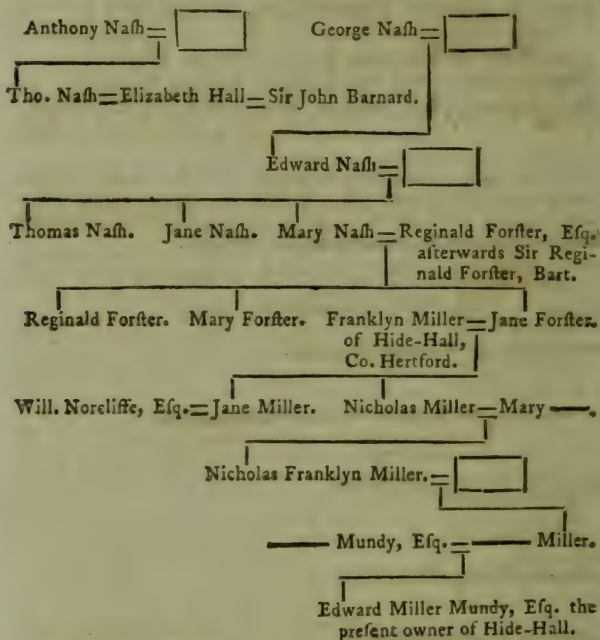


But this pedigree is founded on a mistake, and there is undoubtedly no lineal descendant of Shakspeare now living. The mistake was,
VOL. I. [M] the

Mr. Richard Queeny², Gent. of London, was buried
May 23, 1656.

Mr.

the supposing that Sir Reginald Forster married a daughter of Mr. Thomas Nash and Elizabeth Hall, who had no issue, either by that gentleman or her second husband, Sir John Barnard. Sir Reginald Forster married the daughter of Edward Nash, Esq. of East Greenwich in the county of Kent, cousin-german to Mr. Thomas Nash; and the pedigree ought to have been formed thus:



That I am right in this statement, appears from the will of Edward Nash, (see p. 134, n. 7.) and from the following inscription on a monument in the church of Stratford, erected some time after the year 1733, by Jane Norcliffe, the wife of William Norcliffe, Esq. and only daughter of Franklyn Miller, by Jane Forster:

George Hart, son of Thomas Hart, was married by Francis Smyth, Justice of peace, to Hester Ludiate, daughter of Thomas Ludiate, Jan. 9, 1657. [1657-8.] Elizabeth, daughter of George Hart, was baptized Jan. 9, 1658. [1658-9.] Jane, daughter of George Hart, was baptized Dec. 21, 1661. Judith, wife of Thomas Quiney, Gent. was buried Feb. 9, 1661. [1661-62.] Susanna, daughter of George Hart, was baptized March 18, 1663. [1663-4.] Shakspeare, son of George Hart, was baptized Nov. 18, 1666. Mary, daughter of George Hart, was baptized March 31, 1671.

P. M. S.

"Beneath lye interred the body's of Sir Reginald Forster, Baronet, and dame Mary his wife, daughter of *Edward* Nash of East Greenwich, in the county of Kent," &c. For this inscription I am indebted to the kindness of the Rev. Mr. Davenport, Vicar of Stratford-upon-Avon.

Reginald Forster, Esq. who lived at Greenwich, was created a baronet, May 4, 1661. His son Reginald, who married Miss Nash, succeeded to the title on the death of his father, some time after the year 1679. Their only son, Reginald, was buried at Stratford, Aug. 10, 1685.

Mrs. Elizabeth Nash was married to her second husband, Sir John Barnard, at Billesley, about three miles from Stratford-upon-Avon, June 5, 1649, and was buried at Abington in the county of Northampton, Feb. 17, 1669-70; and with her the family of our poet became extinct. MALONE.

¹ The eldest son of Joan Hart, our poet's sister. I have not found any entry in the Register of the deaths of his brothers Thomas and Michael Hart. The latter, I suspect, settled in London, and was perhaps the father of Charles Hart, the celebrated tragedian, who, I believe, was born about the year 1630. MALONE.

² This gentleman was born in 1587, and was brother to Thomas Quiney, who married Shakspeare's youngest daughter. It does not appear when Thomas Quiney died. There is a defect in the Register during the years 1642, 1643, and 1644; and another *lacuna* from March 17, to Nov. 18, 1663. Our poet's son-in-law probably died in the latter of those periods; for his wife, who died in Feb. 1661-2, in the Register of Burials for that year is described thus: "*Judith, uxor* Thomas Quiney." Had her husband been then dead, she would have been denominated *vidua*. MALONE.

180 STRATFORD REGISTER.

Thomas, son of George Hart, was baptized March 3, 1673. [1673-4.]

George, son of George Hart, was baptized Aug. 20, 1676.

Margaret Hart³, widow, was buried Nov. 28, 1682.

Daniel Smith and Sufanna Hart were married April 16, 1688.

Shakspeare Hart was married to Anne Prew, April 10, 1694.

William Shakspeare, son of Shakspeare Hart, was baptized Sept. 14, 1695.

Hester, wife of George Hart, was buried April 29, 1696.

Anne, daughter of Shakspeare and Anne Hart, was baptized Aug. 9, 1700.

George, son of George and Mary Hart, was baptized Nov. 29, 1700.

George Hart⁴ was buried May 3, 1702.

Hester, daughter of George Hart, was baptized Feb. 10, 1702. [1702-3.]

Catharine, daughter of Shakspeare and Anne Hart, was baptized July 19, 1703.

Mary, daughter of George Hart, was baptized Oct. 7, 1705.

Mary, wife of George Hart, was buried Oct. 7, 1705.

George Hart was married to Sarah Mountford, Feb. 20, 1728. [1728-9.]

Thomas⁵, son of George Hart, Jun. was baptized May 9, 1729.

Sarah, daughter of George Hart, was baptized Sept. 29, 1733.

Anne, daughter of Shakspeare Hart, was buried March 29, 1738.

³ Probably the wife of Thomas Hart, who must have been married in or before the year 1633. The marriage ceremony was not performed at Stratford, there being no entry of it in the Register. MALONE.

⁴ He was born in 1636. MALONE.

⁵ This Thomas Hart, who is the fifth in descent from Joan Hart, our poet's sister, is now (1788) living at Stratford, in the house in which Shakspeare was born. MALONE.

Anne,

Anne, daughter of George Hart, was baptized Sept. 29, 1740.
 William Shakspeare, son of William Shakspeare Hart, was baptized Jan. 8, 1743. [1743-4.]
 William Shakspeare, son of William Shakspeare Hart, was buried March 8, 1744. [1744-5.]
 William, son of George Hart, was buried April 28, 1745.
 George Hart⁶ was buried Aug. 29, 1745.
 Thomas, son of William Shakspeare Hart, was buried March 12, 1746. [1746-7.]
 Shakspeare Hart⁷ was buried July 7, 1747.
 Catharine, daughter of William Shakspeare Hart, was baptized May 10, 1748.
 William Shakspeare Hart⁸ was buried Feb. 28, 1749. [1749-50.]
 The widow Hart⁹ was buried July 10, 1753.
 John, son of Thomas Hart, was baptized Aug. 18, 1755.
 Anne, daughter of Shakspeare and Anne Hart, was buried Feb. 5, 1760.
 Frances, daughter of Thomas Hart, was baptized Aug. 8, 1760.
 Thomas, son of Thomas Hart, was baptized Aug. 10, 1764.
 Anne, daughter of Thomas Hart, was baptized Jan. 16, 1767.
 Sarah, daughter of George Hart, was buried Sept. 10, 1768.
 Frances, daughter of Thomas Hart, was buried Oct. 31, 1774.
 George Hart¹ was buried July 8, 1778.

⁶ He was born in 1676, and was great grandson to Joan Hart.

MALONE.

⁷ He was born in 1666, and was also great grandson to Joan Hart.

MALONE.

⁸ He was born in 1695. MALONE.

⁹ This absurd mode of entry seems to have been adopted for the purpose of concealment rather than information; for by the omission of the christian name, it is impossible to ascertain from the Register, who was meant. The person here described was, I believe, Anne, the widow of Shakspeare Hart, who died in 1747. MALONE.

¹ He was born in 1700. MALONE.

SHAKSPEARE'S COAT OF ARMS.

The following instrument¹ is copied from the original in the College of Heralds: It is marked G. 13, P. 349.

TO all and singuler noble and gentlemen of all estats and degrees, bearing arms, to whom these presents shall come, William Dethick, Garter, Principall King of Arms of England, and William Camden, alias Clarencieulx, King of Arms for the south, east, and west parts of this realme, sendethe greeting. Know ye, that in all nations and kingdoms the record and remembrance of the valeant facts and vertuous dispositions of worthie men have been made knowne and divulged by certeyne shields of arms and tokens of chevalrie; the grant and testimonie whereof apperteyneth unto us, by vertu of our offices from the Quenes most Exc. Majestie, and her Highenes most noble and victorious progenitors: wherefore being solicited, and by credible report informed, that John Shakspeare, now of Stratford-upon-Avon, in the counte of Warwick, gent. whose parent, great grandfather, and late anteecessor, for his faithfull and approved service to the late most prudent prince, king Henry VII. of famous memorie, was advaunced and rewarded with lands and tenements, geven to him in those parts of Warwickshere, where they have continewed by some descents in good reputacion and

¹ In the Herald's Office are the first draughts of John Shakspeare's grant or confirmation of arms, by William Dethick, Garter, Principal King at Arms, 1596. See Vincent's Prefs, Vol. 157, N^o 23, and 24.

STEEVENS.

In a Manuscript in the College of Heralds, marked W. z. p. 276, is the following note: "As for the *speare in bend*, it is a patible difference, and the person to whom it was granted hath borne magistracy, and was justice of peace at Stratford-upon-Avon. He married the daughter and heire of *Arderne*, and was able to maintain that estate." MALONE.

credit;

credit; and for that the said John Shakspeare having maryed the daughter and one of the heys of Robert Arden of Wellincote, in the said countie, and also produced this his auncient cote of arms, heretofore assigned to him whilest he was her Majesties officer and baylese of that towne²; In consideration of the premisses, and for the encouragement of his posteritie, unto whom suche blazon of arms and achievements of inheritance from theyre said mother, by the auncyent custome and lawes of arms, maye lawfully descend; We the said Garter and Clarencieux have assigned, graunted, and by these presents exemplified unto the said John Shakspeare, and to his posteritie, that shield and cote of arms, *viz. In a field of gould upon a bend sables a speare of the first, the poynt upward, bedded argent*; and for his crest or cognisance, *A falcon with his wyngs displayed, standing on a wrethe of his coullers, supporting a speare armed bedded, or Steele sylver, fixxed uppon a helmet with mantell and tassellis*, as more playnely maye appeare depicted on this margent; and we have likewise uppon on other escucheon impaled the same with the auncyent arms of the said Arden³ of Wellincote; signifieng therby, that it maye and shalbe lawfull for the said John Shakspeare, gent. to beare and use the same shield

² — *his auncient cote of arms, heretofore assigned to him whilest he was her Majesties officer and baylese of that towne*;] This grant of arms was made by — Cook, Clarencieux, in 1569, but is not now extant in the Herald's-Office. MALONE.

³ — *and we have likewise—impaled the same with the auncyent arms of the said Arden—*] It is said by the modern editor of *Arden of Feversham* (first published in 1592 and republished in 1770) that Shakspeare descended by the female line from the gentleman whose unfortunate end is the subject of this tragedy. But the assertion appears to want support, the true name of the person who was murdered at Feversham being *Ardern* and not *Arden*. *Ardern* might be called *Arden* in the play for the sake of better sound, or might be corrupted in the chronicle of Holinshed: yet it is unlikely that the true spelling should be overlooked among the Heralds, whose interest it is to recommend by ostentatious accuracy the trifles in which they deal. STEEVENS.

Ardern was the original name, but in Shakspeare's time it had been softened to *Arden*. See p. 103. n. 1. MALONE.

of arms, single or impaled, as aforesaid, during his naturall lyffe; and that it shalbe lawfull for his children, yssue, and posteritye, (lawfully begotten,) to beare, use, and quarter, and show forth the same, with theyre dewe differences, in all lawfull warlyke facts and civile use or exercises, according to the lawes of arms, and custome that to gentlemen belongethe, without let or interruption of any person or persons, for use or bearing the same. In wyttnesse and testemonye whereof we have subscribed our names, and fastened the seals of our offices, geven at the Office of Arms, London, the day of in the xlii yere of the reigne of our most gracious Sovraigne lady Elizabeth, by the grace of God, quene of England, France, and Ireland, defender of the faith, &c. 1599.

SHAKSPEARE'S WILL,

From the ORIGINAL

In the Office of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury.

Vicesimo quinto die Martii¹, Anno Regni Domini nostri Jacobo nunc Regis Angliæ, &c. decimo quarto, et Scotiæ quadragesimo nono. Anno Domini 1616.

IN the name of God, Amen. I William Shakspeare of Stratford-upon-Avon, in the county of Warwick. gent. in perfect health and memory, (God be praised!) do make and ordain this my last will and testament in manner and form following; that is to say:

First, I commend my soul into the hands of God my creator, hoping, and assuredly believing, through the only merits of Jesus Christ my Saviour, to be made partaker of life everlasting; and my body to the earth whereof it is made.

Item, I give and bequeath unto my daughter Judith one hundred and fifty pounds of lawful English money, to be paid unto her in manner and form following; that is to say, one hundred pounds in discharge of her marriage portion within one year after my decease, with consideration after the rate of two shillings in the pound for so long time as the same shall be unpaid unto her after my decease; and the fifty pounds residue thereof, upon her surrendering of, or giving of such sufficient security as the overseers of this my will shall like of, to surrender or grant, all her estate and right that shall descend or come unto her after my decease, or that she now hath, of, in, or to, one copyhold tenement, with the appurtenances, lying and being in Stratford-upon-Avon aforesaid, in the said county of Warwick, being parcel or holden of the manor of Rowington, unto my daughter Susanna Hall, and her heirs for ever.

Item, I give and bequeath unto my said daughter Judith one hundred and fifty pounds more, if she, or any issue of her body, be living at the end of three years

¹ Our poet's will appears to have been drawn up in February, though not executed till the following month; for *February* was first written, and afterwards struck out, and *March* written over it. MALONE.

next ensuing the day of the date of this my will, during which time my executors to pay her consideration from my decease according to the rate aforesaid: and if she die within the said term without issue of her body, then my will is, and I do give and bequeath one hundred pounds thereof to my niece² Elizabeth Hall, and the fifty pounds to be set forth by my executors during the life of my sister Joan Hart, and the use and profit thereof coming, shall be paid to my said sister Joan, and after her decease the said fifty pounds shall remain amongst the children of my said sister, equally to be divided amongst them; but if my said daughter Judith be living at the end of the said three years, or any issue of her body, then my will is, and so I devise and bequeath the said hundred and fifty pounds to be set out by my executors and overseers for the best benefit of her and her issue, and the stock not to be paid unto her so long as she shall be married and covert baron; but my will is, that she shall have the consideration yearly paid unto her during her life, and after her decease the said stock and consideration to be paid to her children, if she have any, and if not, to her executors or assigns, she living the said term after my decease: provided that if such husband as she shall at the end of the said three years be married unto, or at any [time] after, do sufficiently assure unto her, and the issue of her body, lands answerable to the portion by this my will given unto her, and to be adjudged so by my executors and overseers, then my will is, that the said hundred and fifty pounds shall be paid to such husband as shall make such assurance, to his own use.

Item, I give and bequeath unto my said sister Joan twenty pounds, and all my wearing apparel, to be paid and delivered within one year after my decease; and I do will and devise unto her the house, with the appurtenances, in Stratford, wherein she dwelleth, for her natural life, under the yearly rent of twelve-pence.

Item, I give and bequeath unto her three sons, William

² — to my niece —] Elizabeth Hall was our poet's grand-daughter. So, in *Othello*, Act I. sc. i. Iago says to Brabantio, "You'll have your nephews neigh to you;" meaning his grand-children. See the note there. MALONE.

Hart, ——— Hart³, and Michael Hart, five pounds apiece, to be paid within one year after my decease.

Item, I give and bequeath unto the said Elizabeth Hall all my plate, (except my broad silver and gilt bowl⁴,) that I now have at the date of this my will.

Item, I give and bequeath unto the poor of Stratford aforesaid ten pounds; to Mr. Thomas Combe⁵ my sword; to Thomas Ruffel, esq. five pounds; and to Francis Collins⁶ of the borough of Warwick, in the county of Warwick, gent. thirteen pounds six shillings and eightpence, to be paid within one year after my decease.

Item, I give and bequeath to Hamlet [*Hamnet*] Sadler⁷

3 — *Hart*,] It is singular that neither Shakspeare nor any of his family should have recollected the christian name of his nephew, who was born at Stratford but eleven years before the making of his will. His christian name was *Thomas*; and he was baptized in that town, July 24, 1605. MALONE.

4 — *except my broad silver and gilt bowl*,] This bowl, as we afterwards find, our poet bequeathed to his daughter Judith. Instead of *bowl*, Mr. Theobald, and all the subsequent editors, have here printed *boxes*. MALONE.

5 — *Mr. Thomas Combe*,] This gentleman was baptized at Stratford, Feb. 9, 1588-9, so that he was twenty-seven years old at the time of Shakspeare's death. He died at Stratford in July 1657, aged 68; and his elder brother William died at the same place, Jan. 30, 1666-7, aged 80. Mr. Thomas Combe by his will made July 20, 1656, directed his executors to convert all his personal property into money, and to lay it out in the purchase of lands, to be settled on William Combe, the eldest son of John Combe of Allchurch in the county of Worcester, Gent. and his heirs male; remainder to his two brothers successively. Where therefore our poet's sword has wandered, I have not been able to discover. I have taken the trouble to ascertain the ages of Shakspeare's friends and relations, and the time of their deaths, because we are thus enabled to judge how far the traditions concerning him, which were communicated to Mr. Rowe in the beginning of this century, are worthy of credit. MALONE.

6 — *to Francis Collins*—] This gentleman, who was the son of Mr. Walter Collins, was baptized at Stratford, Dec. 24, 1582. I know not when he died. MALONE.

7 — *to Hamnet Sadler*—] This gentleman was godfather to Shakspeare's only son, who was called after him. Mr. Sadler, I believe, was born about the year 1550, and died at Stratford-upon-Avon, in October 1624. His wife, Judith Sadler, who was godmother to Shakspeare's youngest daughter, was buried there, March 23, 1613-14. Our poet probably was godfather to their son *William*, who was baptized at Stratford, Feb. 5, 1597-8. MALONE.

twenty-six shillings eight-pence, to buy him a ring; to William Reynolds, gent. twenty-six shillings eight-pence, to buy him a ring; to my godson William Walker⁸, twenty shillings in gold; to Anthony Nash⁹, gent. twenty-six shillings eight-pence; and to Mr. John Nash¹, twenty-six shillings eight-pence; and to my fellows, John Hemynge, Richard Burbage, and Henry Cundell², twenty-six shillings eight-pence apiece, to buy them rings.

Item, I give, will, bequeath, and devise, unto my daughter Susanna Hall, for better enabling of her to perform this my will, and towards the performance thereof, all that capital messuage or tenement, with the appurtenances, in Stratford aforesaid, called The New Place, wherein I now dwell, and two messuages or tenements, with the appurtenances, situate, lying, and being in Henley-street, within the borough of Stratford aforesaid; and all my barns, stables, orchards, gardens, lands, tenements, and hereditaments whatsoever, situate, lying, and being, or to be had, received, perceived*, or taken, within the towns, hamlets, villages, fields, and grounds of Stratford-upon-Avon, Old Stratford, Bishopston, and Welcombe³, or in any of them, in the said county

⁸ — to my godson *William Walker*,] William, the son of Henry Walker, was baptized at Stratford, Oct. 16, 1608. I mention this circumstance, because it ascertains that our authour was at his native town in the autumn of that year. Mr. William Walker was buried at Stratford, March 1, 1679-80. MALONE.

⁹ — to *Anthony Nash*,] He was father of Mr. Thomas Nash, who married our poet's grand-daughter, Elizabeth Hall. He lived, I believe, at Welcombe, where his estate lay; and was buried at Stratford, Nov. 18, 1622. MALONE.

¹ — to *Mr. John Nash*,] This gentleman died at Stratford, and was buried there, Nov. 10, 1623. MALONE.

² — to my fellows, *John Hemynge, Richard Burbage, and Henry Cundell*,] These our poet's fellows did not very long survive him. Burbage died in March 1619; Cundell in December, 1627; and Heminge in October, 1630. See their wills in the *Account of our old Actors* in the Second Part of this volume. MALONE.

* — *received, perceived*,] Instead of these words, we have hitherto had in all the printed copies of this will, *referred, preserved*. MALONE.

³ — *old Stratford, Bishopston, and Welcombe*,] The lands of Old Stratford, Bishopston, and Welcombe, here devised, were in Shakspeare's time a continuation of one large field, all in the parish of Stratford.

county of Warwick; and also all that messuage or tenement, with the appurtenances, wherein one John Robinson dwelleth, situate, lying, and being, in the Blackfriars in London near the Wardrobe^s; and all other my lands, tenements, and hereditaments whatsoever; to have and to hold all and singular the said premises, with their appurtenances, unto the said Susanna Hall, for and during the term of her natural life; and after her decease to the first son of her body lawfully issuing, and to the heirs males of the body of the said first son lawfully issuing; and for default of such issue, to the second son of her body lawfully issuing, and to the heirs males of the body of the said second son lawfully issuing; and for default of such heirs, to the third son of the body of the said Susanna lawfully issuing, and to the heirs males of the body of the said third son lawfully issuing; and for default of such issue, the same so to be and remain to the fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh sons of her body, lawfully issuing one after another, and to the heirs males of the bodies of the said fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh sons lawfully issuing, in such manner as it is before limited to be and remain to the first, second, and third

ford. Bishopton is two miles from Stratford, and Welcombe one. For *Bishopton*, Mr. Theobald erroneously printed *Bushaxton*, and the error has been continued in all the subsequent editions. The word in Shakspeare's original will is spelt *Bushopton*, the vulgar pronunciation of Bishopton.

I searched the Indexes in the Rolls-chapel from the year 1589 to 1616, with the hope of finding an enrolment of the purchase-deed of the estate here devised by our poet, and of ascertaining its extent and value; but it was not enrolled during that period, nor could I find any inquisition taken after his death, by which its value might have been ascertained. I suppose it was conveyed by the former owner to Shakspeare, not by bargain and sale, but by a deed of feoffment, which it was not necessary to enroll. MALONE.

4 — *that messuage or tenement—in the Blackfriars in London near the Wardrobe;*] This was the house which was mortgaged to Henry Walker. See p. 192.

By *the Wardrobe* is meant the King's Great Wardrobe, a royal house, near Puddle Wharf, purchased by King Edward the Third from Sir John Beauchamp, who built it. King Richard III. was lodged in this house in the second year of his reign. See Stowe's *Survey*, p. 693, edit. 1618. After the fire of London this office was kept in the Savoy; but it is now abolished. MALONE.

sons of her body, and to their heirs males; and for default of such issue, the said premises to be and remain to my said niece Hall, and the heirs males of her body lawfully issuing; and for default of such issue, to my daughter Judith, and the heirs males of her body lawfully issuing; and for default of such issue, to the right heirs of me the said William Shakspeare for ever.

Item. I give unto my wife my second best bed, with the furniture⁵.

Item, I give and bequeath to my said daughter Judith my broad silver gilt bowl. All the rest of my goods, chattels, leases, plate, jewels, and household-stuff whatsoever, after my debts and legacies paid, and my funeral expences discharged, I give, devise, and bequeath to my son-in-law, John Hall, gent. and my daughter Susanna his wife, whom I ordain and make executors of this my last will and testament. And I do entreat and appoint the said Thomas Russel, esq. and Francis Collins, gent. to be overseers hereof. And do revoke all former wills, and publish this to be my last will and testament. In witness whereof I have herunto put my hand, the day and year first above-written.

By me⁶ William Shakspeare.

Witness to the publishing hereof,

Fra. Collins⁷,

Julius Shaw⁸,

John Robinson⁹,

Hamnet Sadler¹,

Robert Whattcott.

Probatum fuit testamentum superscriptum apud London, coram Magistro William Byrde, Legum Doctore, &c. vicesimo secundo die mensis Junii, Anno Domini 1616; juramento Johannis Hall unius ex. cui, &c. de bene, &c. jurat. reservata potestate, &c. Susannæ Hall alt. ex. &c. eam cum venerit, &c. petitur. &c.

⁵ — my second best bed, with the furniture.] Thus Shakspeare's original will. Mr. Theobald and the other modern editors have been more bountiful to Mrs. Shakspeare, having printed instead of these words, "— my brown best bed, with the furniture." MALONE.

It appears, in the original will of Shakspeare, (now in the Prerogative-Office Doctors' Commons,) that he had forgot his wife; the

legacy

William
Shakespeare

William Shakespeare

By Mr William Shakespeare

wished to be publishing
first. Fra: Collyns
John Shakespeare
John Robinson
Hansard Sadler
Robert Wiggall

legacy to her being expressed by an interlinization, as well as those to Heminge, Burbage, and Condell.

The will is written on three sheets of paper, the two last of which are undoubtedly subscribed with Shakspeare's own hand. The first indeed has his name in the margin, but it differs somewhat in spelling as well as manner, from the two signatures that follow. The reader will find a fac-simile of all the three, as well as those of the witnesses, opposite p. 190. STEEVENS.

The name at the top of the margin of the first sheet was probably written by the scrivener who drew the will. This was the constant practice in Shakspeare's time. MALONE.

⁶ By me *William Shakspeare.*] This was the mode of our poet's time. Thus the Register of Stratford is signed at the bottom of each page, in the year 1616, "*Per me* Richard Watts, Minister." These concluding words have hitherto been inaccurately exhibited thus: "*— the day and year first above-written by me, William Shakspeare.*" Neither the day, nor year, nor any preceding part of this will, was written by our poet. "*By me,*" &c. only means—*The above is the will of me* William Shakspeare. MALONE.

⁷ — *Fra. Collins.*] See p. 187, n. 6. MALONE.

⁸ — *Julius Sbaro*—] was born in Sept. 1571. He married Anne Boyes, May 5, 1594; and died at Stratford in June 1629. MALONE.

⁹ — *John Robinson.*] John, son of Thomas Robinson, was baptized at Stratford, Nov. 30, 1589. I know not when he died. MALONE.

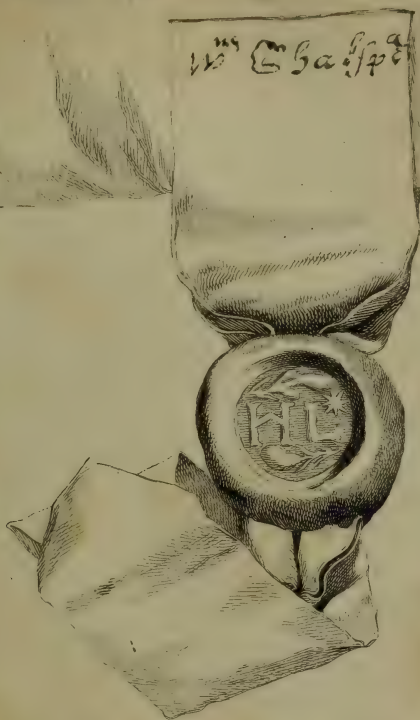
¹ — *Hamnet Sadler.*] See p. 187, n. 7. MALONE.

M O R T G A G E,
MADE BY SHAKSPEARE,
A. D. 1612-13.

THE following is a transcript of a deed executed by our authour three years before his death. The original deed, which was found in the year 1768, among the title-deeds of the Rev. Mr. Fetherstonhaugh, of Oxted in the county of Surry, is now in the possession of Mrs. Garrick, by whom it was obligingly transmittted to me through the hands of the Hon. Mr. Horace Walpole. Much has lately been said in various publications, relative to the proper mode of spelling Shakspeare's name. It is hoped we shall hear no more idle babble upon this subject. He spelt his name himself as I have just now written it, without the middle *e*. Let this therefore for ever decide the question.

It should be remembered that to all ancient deeds were appended labels of parchment, which were inserted at the bottom of the deed; on the upper part of which labels thus rising above the rest of the parchment, the executing parties wrote their names. Shakspeare, not finding room for the whole of his name on the label, attempted to write the remaining letters at top, but having allowed himself only room enough to write the letter *a*, he gave the matter up. His hand-writing, of which a *fac-simile* is annexed, is much neater than many others, which I have seen, of that age. He neglected, however, to scrape the parchment, in consequence of which the letters appear imperfectly formed.

He purchased the estate here mortgaged, from Henry Walker, for 140*l*. as appears from the enrolment of the deed of bargain and sale now in the Rolls-Chapel, dated the preceding day, March 10, 1612-13. The deed here printed shews that he paid down only eighty pounds of the purchase-money, and mortgaged the premises for the remainder. This deed and the purchase-deed were
probably



*Shakespeare's Autograph, if it had been written
on Paper, would have appeared thus.*

Wm Shakespeare



probably both executed on the same day, (March 10,) like our modern conveyance of Lease and Release.

MALONE.

THIS INDENTURE made the eleaventh day of March, in the yeares of the reigne of our Sovereigne Lorde James, by the grace of God, king of England, Scotland, Fraunce, and Ireland, defender of the faith, &c. that is to say, of England, Fraunce and Ireland the tenth, and of Scotland the six-and-fortith; Between William Shakespeare of Stratford-upon-Avon, in the Countie of Warwick, gentleman, William Johnson, Citizen and Vintener of London, John Jackson, and John Hemyng of London, gentlemen, of thone partie, and Henry Walker, Citizen and Minstrell of London, of thother partie; Witneffeth, that the said William Shakespeare, William Johnson, John Jackson, and John Hemyng, have demised, graunted, and to ferme letten, and by theis presents do demise, graunt, and to ferme lett unto the said Henry Walker, all that dwelling-houfe or tenement, with thappurtenaunts, situate and being within the precinct, circuit and compasse of the late Black ffryers, London, sometymes in the tenure of James Gardyner, Esquire, and since that in the tenure of John Fortescue, gent. and now or late being in the tenure or occupation of one William Ireland, or of his assignee or assignes; abutting upon a streete leading downe to Puddle Wharfe, on the east part, right against the kings Majesties Wardrobe; part of which said tenement is erected over a greate gate leading to a capitall messuage, which sometyme was in the tenure of William Blackwell, Esquire, deceased, and since that in the tenure or occupation of the right honourable Henry now Earle of Northumberlande: And also all that plott of ground on the west side of the same tenement, which was lately inclosed with boords on two sides thereof, by Anne Baton, widow, soe farre and in such sorte as the same was inclosed by the said Anne Baton, and not otherwise; and being on

the third side inclosed with an old brick wall; which said plott of ground was sometyne parcell and taken out of a great voyde peece of ground lately used for a garden; and also the soyle whereupon the said tenement standeth; and also the said brick wall and boords which doe inclose the said plott of ground; with free entrie, accesse, ingresse, egressse, and regresse, in, by, and through, the said great gate and yarde there, unto the usual dore of the said tenement: And also all and singular cellors, sollers, romes, lights, easiements, profitts, commodities, and appurtenaunts whatsoever to the said dwelling-house or tenement belonging or in any wise apperteyning: TO HAVE and to HOLDE the said dwelling-house or tenement, cellors, sollers, romes, plott of ground, and all and singular other the premisses above by theis presents mentioned to bee demised, and every part and parcell thereof, with thappurtenaunts, unto the said Henry Walker, his executors, administrators and assignes, from the feast of thannundciacon of the blessed Virgin Marye next coming after the date hereof, unto thende and terme of One hundred yeares from thence next ensuing, and fullie to be compleat and ended, withoute impeachment of, or for, any manner of waste: YELDING and paying therefore yearlie during the said terme unto the said William Shakespeare, William Johnson, John Jackson, and John Hemyng, their heires and assignes, a pepper corne at the feast of Easter yearly, yf the same be lawfullie demaunded, and noe more. PROVIDED alwayes, that if the said William Shakespeare, his heires, executors, administrators or assignes, or any of them, doe well and trulie paie or cause to be paid to the said Henry Walker, his executors, administrators or assignes, the some of threescore pounds of lawfull money of England, in and upon the nyne and twentieth day of September next coming after the date hereof, at, or in, the nowe dwelling-house of the said Henry Walker, situate and being in the parish of Saint Martyn neer Ludgate, of London, at one entier payment without delaie; That then and from thenesforth this presente lease, demise and
graunt,

graunt, and all and every matter and thing herein conteyned (other then this provifoe,) fhall ceafe, determine, and bee utterlie voyde, fruftrate, and of none effect, as though the fame had never beene had, ne made; theis presents or any thing therein conteyned to the contrary thereof in any wife notwithstanding. And the faid William Shakespeare for himfelfe, his heires, executors, and adminiftrators, and for every of them, doth covenant, promiffe and graunt to, and with, the faid Henry Walker, his executors, adminiftrators, and affignes, and everie of them, by theis presentes, that he the faid William Shakespeare, his heires, executors, adminiftrators or affignes, fhall and will cleerlie acquite, exonerate and difcharge, or from tyme to tyme, and at all tymes hereafter, well and fufficientlie fave and keepe harmlefs the faid Henry Walker, his executors, adminiftrators, and affignes, and every of them, and the faid premisses by theis presents demifed, and every parcell thereof, with thappurtenaunts, of and from all and al manner of former and other bargaynes, fales, guiftes, graunts, leafes, jointures, dowers, intailes, ftatuts, recognizaunces, judgments, executions; and of, and from, all and every other charge, titles, troubles, and incumbrances whatfoever by the faid William Shakespeare, William Johnfon, John Jackson, and John Hemyng, or any of them, or by their or any of their meanes, had made, committed or done, before thenfealing and delivery of theis presents, or hereafter before the faid nyne and twentieth day of September next comming after the date hereof, to bee had, made, committed or done, except the rents and fervits to the cheef lord or lords of the fee or fees of the premisses, for, or in refpect of, his or their feignorie or feignories onlie, to bee due and done.

IN WITNESSE whereof the faid parties to theis indentures interchangeablie have fett their feales. Yeoven the day and years firft above written, 1612 [1612-13].

W^m Shakspe^a. W^m Johnson. Jo. Jackson.

196 SHAKSPEARE'S MORTGAGE.

*Ensealed and delivered by the said
William Shakespeare, William
Johnson, and John Jackson*,
in the presence of*

Will. Atkinson.
Ed. Oudry.

Robert Andrews, Scr†.
Henry Lawrence, Servant to
the said Scr.

* John Heming did not sign, or seal. MALONE.

† i. e. Scrivener. MALONE.

ANCIENT AND MODERN
COMMENDATORY VERSES
ON
SHAKSPEARE.

ON WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE, who died in April,
1616¹.

R Enowned Spenser, lie a thought more nigh
To learned Chaucer; and rare Beaumont lie
A little nearer Spenser, to make room
For Shakspeare, in your three-fold, four-fold tomb.

To

¹ In a collection of manuscript poems which was in the possession of the late Gustavus Brander, Esq. these verses are entitled—"BASEE HIS ELEGIE one [on] poet Shakspeare, who died in April 1616." The Ms. appears to have been written soon after the year 1621. In the edition of our authour's poems in 1640, they are subscribed with the initials W. B. only. They were erroneously attributed to Dr. Donne, in a quarto edition of his poems printed in 1633; but his son Dr. John Donne, a Civilian, published a more correct edition of his father's poems in 1735, and rejected the verses on Shakspeare, knowing, without doubt, that they were written by another.

From the words "*who died in April 1616*," it may be inferred that these lines were written recently after Shakspeare's death, when the month and year in which he died were well known. At a more distant period the month would probably have been forgotten; and that was not an age of such curiosity as would have induced a poet to search the register at Stratford on such a subject. From the address to Chaucer and Spenser it should seem, that when these verses were composed the writer thought it probable that a cenotaph would be erected to Shakspeare in Westminster-Abbey.

There is a copy of these lines in a manuscript volume of poems written by W. Herrick and others, among Rawlinson's Collections in the Bodleian library at Oxford; and another among the Sloanian Mss. in the Museum, N^o. 1702. In the Oxford Copy they are entitled "Shakspeare's Epitaph;" but the authour is not mentioned. There are some slight variations in the different copies, which I shall set down.

Line 2. To rare Beaumont, and learned Beaumont lie, &c. edit. 1633.

Line 5. To lodge in one bed all four make a shift—Ms. Brander.

To lodge all four in one bed, &c. Ms. R. and S.

To lie all four, &c. Edit. 1633.

[N 3]

Line

To lodge all four in one bed make a shift
 Until doomſday; for hardly will a fiſt²
 Betwixt this day and that by fate be ſlain,
 For whom your curtains may be drawn again.
 But if precedency in death doth bar
 A fourth place in your ſacred ſepulchre,
 Under this carved marble of thine own,
 Sleep, rare tragedian, Shakspeare, ſleep alone.
 Thy unmoleſted peace, unſhared cave,
 Poſſeſs, as lord, not tenant, of thy grave;
 That unto us and others it may be
 Honour hereafter to be laid by thee.

WILLIAM BASSE.

Line 7. So B. S. and R.

— *by fates* be ſlain. Edit. 1633.

Line 8. So B. and S.

— *will* be drawn again. R.— *need* be drawn again. 1633.

Line 9. But if precedency of death, &c. Edit. 1633.

If your precedency in death, &c. B. R. S.

Line 10. So B. R. and edit. 1633.

A fourth to have place in your ſepulcher,—S.

Line 11. So B. and R.

— under this *curled* marble of thine own. Edit. 1633.— under this *fable*, &c. S.

Line 12. So B. S. and edit. 1633.

Sleep, rare *comedian*, &c. R.

Line 13. So B. and R.

Thine unmoleſted peace, unſhared cave—S.Thy unmoleſted peace in an *unſhared* cave.—Edit. 1633.

Line 14. So B.

Poſſeſs as lord not tenant *of the* grave. S.— — — — — *to thy* grave. R.

This couplet is not in edit. 1633.

Line 15. So Edit. 1633.

That unto us, or others, &c. B. R. and S. MALONE.

² *Fift* was formerly corruptly written and pronounced *fiſt*. I have adhered to the old ſpelling on account of the rhyme. This corrupt pronounciation yet prevails in Scotland, and in many parts of England.

MALONE.

To the Memory of my Beloved,
the Author, Mr. WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE,
and what he hath left us.

To draw no envy, Shakspeare, on thy name,
Am I thus ample to thy book, and fame;
While I confess thy writings to be such,
As neither man, nor muse, can praise too much;
'Tis true, and all men's suffrage: but these ways
Were not the paths I meant unto thy praise:
For feeblest ignorance on these may light,
Which, when it sounds at best, but echoes right;
Or blind affection, which doth ne'er advance
The truth, but gropes, and urgeth all by chance;
Or crafty malice might pretend this praise,
And think to ruin, where it seem'd to raise:
These are, as some infamous bawd, or whore,
Should praise a matron; what could hurt her more?
But thou art proof against them; and, indeed,
Above the ill fortune of them, or the need:
I, therefore, will begin:—Soul of the age,
The applause, delight, the wonder of our stage,
My Shakspeare, rise! I will not lodge thee by
Chaucer, or Spenser; or bid Beaumont lie
A little further, to make thee a room³:
Thou art a monument, without a tomb;
And art alive still, while thy book doth live,
And we have wits to read, and praise to give.
That I not mix thee so, my brain excuses;
I mean, with great but disproportion'd muses:
For, if I thought my judgment were of years,
I should commit thee surely with thy peers;
And tell—how far thou didst our Lily outshine⁴,
Or sporting Kyd⁵, or Marlowe's mighty line⁶.

And

3 — to make thee a room:] See the preceding verses by Basse.

MALONE.

4 — our Lily outshine,] *Lilly* wrote nine plays during the reign of Q. Eliz. viz. *Alexander and Campaspe*, T. C; *Endymion*, C; *Galatea*, C; *Loves Metamorphosis*, Dram. Past; *Maids Metamorphosis*, C; *Mother Bombe*, C; *Mydas*, C; *Sappho and Phao*, C; and *Woman*

And though thou hadst small Latin, and less Greek,
 From thence to honour thee, I would not seek
 For names; but call forth thund'ring Æschylus,
 Euripides, and Sophocles, to us,
 Pacuvius, Accius, him of Cordova dead,
 To life again, to hear thy buskin tread

n the Moon, C. To the pedantry of this author perhaps we are indebted for the first attempt to polish and reform our language. See his *Euphues and his England*, STEEVENS.

⁵ — or *sporting Kyd,*] It appears from Heywood's *Actor's Vindication* that *Thomas Kyd* was the author of the *Spanish Tragedy*. The late *Mr. Hawkins* was of opinion that *Soliman and Perseda* was by the same hand. The only piece however, which has descended to us, even with the initial letters of his name affixed to it, is *Pompey the Great his fair Cornelia's Tragedy*, which was first published in 1594, and, with some alteration in the title-page, again in 1595. This is no more than a translation from *Robert Garnier*, a French poet, who distinguished himself during the reigns of Charles IX. Henry III. and Henry IV. and died at Mans in 1602, in the 56th year of his age.

STEEVENS.

⁶ — or *Marlowe's mighty line.*] *Marlowe* was a performer as well as an author. His contemporary *Heywood* calls him *the best of poets*. He wrote six tragedies, viz. *Dr. Faustus's Tragical History*; *King Edward II*; *Jew of Malta*; *Lust's Dominion*; *Massacre of Paris*; and *Tamburlaine the Great*, in two parts. He likewise joined with *Nash* in writing *Dido Queen of Carthage*, and had begun a translation of *Musæus's Hero and Leander*, which was finished by *Chapman*, and published in 1606. STEEVENS.

Christopher Marlowe was born probably about the year 1566, as he took the degree of Bachelor of Arts at Cambridge, in 1583. I do not believe that he ever was an actor, nor can I find any authority for it higher than the *Theatrum Poetarum* of *Philips*, in 1674, which is inaccurate in many circumstances. *Beard*, who four years after *Marlowe's* death gave a particular account of him, does not speak of him as an actor. "He was," says that writer, "by profession a scholler, brought up from his youth in the universitie of Cambridge, but by practice a play-maker and a poet of scurrilitie." Neither *Drayton*, nor *Decker*, nor *Nashe*, nor the authour of *the Return from Parnassus*, 1606, nor *Heywood* in his prologue to *the Jew of Malta*, give the slightest intimation of *Marlowe's* having trod the stage. He was stabbed in the street, and died of the wound, in 1593. His *Hero and Leander* was published in quarto, in 1598, by *Edward Blount*, as an imperfect work. The fragment ended with this line: "Dang'd down to heil her loathsome carriage." *Chapman* completed the poem, and published it as it now appears, in 1600. MALONE.

And

And shake a stage: or, when thy socks were on,
 Leave thee alone; for the comparifon
 Of all, that insolent Greece, or haughty Rome,
 Sent forth, or fince did from their afhes come.
 Triumph, my Britain! thou haft one to fhew,
 To whom all fcenes of Europe homage owe.
 He was not of an age, but for all time;
 And all the mufes ftill were in their prime,
 When like Apollo he came forth to warm
 Our ears, or like a Mercury to charm.
 Nature herfelf was proud of his defigns,
 And joy'd to wear the drefling of his lines;
 Which were fo richly spun, and woven fo fit,
 As, fince, fhe will vouchfafe no other wit:
 The merry Greek, tart Ariftophanes,
 Neat Terence, witty Plautus, now not pleafe;
 But antiquated and deferted lie,
 As they were not of Nature's family.
 Yet muft I not give nature all; thy art⁷,
 My gentle Shakspeare, muft enjoy a part:—
 For, though the poet's matter nature be,
 His art doth give the fafhion: and that he,
 Who cafts to write a living line, muft fweat,
 (Such as thine are) and ftrike the fecond heat
 Upon the mufes' anvil; turn the fame,
 (And himfelf with it) that he thinks to frame;
 Or, for the laurel, he may gain a fcorn,—
 For a good poet's made, as well as born:
 And fuch wert thou. Look, how the father's face
 Lives in his iffue; even fo the race
 Of Shakspeare's mind, and manners, brightly fhines
 In his well-torned and true-filed lines⁸;

In

⁷ — thy art,

My gentle Shakspeare, muft enjoy a part:—] Yet this writer in his converfation with Mr. Drummond of Hawthornden in 1619, faid, that Shakspeare “wanted art, and fometimes fenfe.” MALONE.

⁸ — true-filed lines;] The fame praife is given to Shakspeare by a preceding writer. “As Epifus Stolo faid that the Mufes would fpeak with Plautus his tongue, if they would fpeak Latin, fo I fay that the Mufes would fpeak with Shakspeare's fine *filed* phrafe, if they would fpeak Englifh.” *Wit's Treafury*, by Francis Meres, 1598.

It

In each of which he seems to shake a lance,
 As brandish'd at the eyes of ignorance.
 Sweet swan of Avon, what a sight it were,
 To see thee in our waters yet appear;
 And make those flights upon the banks of Thames,
 That so did take Eliza, and our James!
 But stay; I see thee in the hemisphere
 Advanc'd, and made a constellation there:—
 Shine forth, thou star of poets; and with rage,
 Or influence, chide, or cheer, the drooping stage;
 Which, since thy flight from hence, hath mourn'd like
 night,
 And despairs day, but for thy volume's light!

BEN. JONSON⁹.

Upon

It is somewhat singular that at a subsequent period Shakspeare was censured for the want of that elegance which is here justly attributed to him. "Though all the laws of Heroick Poem," says the authour of *Theatrum Poetarum*, 1674, "all the laws of tragedy, were exactly observed, yet still this *tour entrejanté*, this poetick *energie*, if I may so call it, would be required to give life to all the rest; which shines through the roughest, most unpolish'd and antiquated language, and may haply be wanting in the most polite and reformed. Let us observe Spenser, with all his rustick obsolete words, with all his rough-hewn clouterly phrases, yet take him throughout, and we shall find in him a graceful and poetic majestie: in like manner Shakspeare, in spite of all his *unfiled* expressions, his rambling and indigested fancies, the laughter of the critical, yet must be confess'd a poet above many that go beyond him in literature some degrees." MALONE.

⁹ — *extinctus amabitur idem.*

This observation of *Horace* was never more completely verified than by the posthumous applause which *Ben Jonson* has bestowed on *Shakspeare*:

— the gracious *Duncan*

Was pitied of *Macbeth*:—marry, he was dead.

Let us now compare the present eulogium of old *Ben* with such of his other sentiments as have reached posterity.

In April 1748, when the *Lover's Melancholy* by *Ford*, (a friend and contemporary of Shakspeare,) was revived for a benefit, the following letter appeared in the *General*, now the *Public*, *Advertiser*.

' — It is hoped that the following *gleaning of theatrical history* will readily obtain a place in your paper. It is taken from a pamphlet written in the reign of Charles I. with this quaint title, "*Old Ben's Light Heart made heavy by Young John's Melancholy Lover*;" and

as

Upon the Lines, and Life, of the famous
Scenick Poet, Master WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE.

Those hands, which you so clapp'd, go now and wring,
You Britains brave; for done are Shakspeare's days;
His days are done, that made the dainty plays,
Which made the globe of heaven and earth to ring :
Dry'd

as it contains some historical anecdotes and altercations concerning *Ben Jonson, Ford, Shakspeare, and the Lover's Melancholy*, it is imagined that a few extracts from it at this juncture, will not be unentertaining to the publick.'

' Those who have any knowledge of the theatre in the reigns of *James and Charles the First*, must know, that *Ben Jonson*, from great critical language, *which was then the portion but of very few*, his merit as a poet, and his constant association with men of letters, did, for a considerable time, *give laws to the stage*.'

' *Ben* was by nature *splenetic and sour*; with a share of envy, (for every anxious genius has some) more than was warrantable in society. By education rather *critically* than *politely* learned; which swell'd his mind into an ostentatious pride of *his own works*, and an overbearing *inexorable* judgment of his contemporaries.'

' This raised him many enemies, who towards the close of his life endeavoured to dethrone *this tyrant*, as the pamphlet styles him, out of the dominion of the theatre. And what greatly contributed to their design, was the *slights and malignances* which the *rigid Ben* too frequently threw out against the *lowly Shakspeare*, whose fame since his death, as appears by the pamphlet, was grown too great for *Ben's* *envy* either to *bear with or wound*.'

' It would greatly exceed the limits of your paper to set down all the *contempts and invectives* which were uttered and written by *Ben*, and are collected and produced in *this pamphlet*, as unanswerable and shaming evidences to prove his *ill-nature and ingratitude* to *Shakspeare*, who first introduced him to the *theatre and fame*.

' But though the whole of these invectives cannot be set down at present, some few of the heads may not be disagreeable, which are as follow.'

' That the man had *imagination and wit* none could deny, but that they were *ever* guided by *true judgment* in the *rules and conduct* of a piece, none could with justice assert, *both* being ever servile to raise the *laughtber of fools* and the *wonder of the ignorant*. That he was a good poet only in *part*,—being ignorant of *all dramattick laws*,—had *little Latin—less Greek*—and speaking of plays, &c.

' To make a child new swaddled, to proceed

' Man, and then shoot up, in one beard and weed,

' Past

Dry'd is that vein, dry'd is the Thespian spring,
 Turn'd all to tears, and Phœbus clouds his rays;
 That corpse, that coffin, now bestick those bays,
 Which crown'd him poet first, then poets' king.

If

- ' Past threescore years: or, with three rusty swords,
- ' And help of some few *foot-and-half-foot* words,
- ' Fight over *York* and *Lancaster's* long jars,
- ' And in the tying-house bring wounds to scars.
- ' He rather prays you will be pleas'd to see
- ' One such to-day, as *other plays* should be;
- ' Where neither *chorus* wafers you o'er the seas, &c.

' This, and such like behaviour, brought *Ben* at last from being the *lawgiver* of the theatre to be the *ridicule* of it, being *personally* introduced there in several pieces, to the *satisfaction* of the publick, who are ever fond of encouraging *personal* ridicule, when the follies and vices of the object are supposed to deserve it.

' But what wounded his pride and fame most sensibly, was the preference which the publick and most of his contemporary wits, gave to *Ford's* *LOVER'S MELANCHOLY*, before his *NEW INN OR LIGHT HEART*. They were both brought on in the *same week* and on the *same stage*; where *Ben's* was *damn'd*, and *Ford's* received with *uncommon applause*: and what made this circumstance still more galling, was, that *Ford* was at the head of the partisans who supported *Shakspeare's* *fame* against *Ben Jonson's* *invectives*.'

' This so incensed old *Ben*, that as an everlasting stigma upon his audience, he prefixed this title to his play—"The *New Inn or Light Heart*. A comedy, as it was *never acted*, but most negligently play'd by some, the *King's* *idle servants*; and more squeamishly beheld and censur'd by others, the *King's* *foolish subjects*." This title is followed by an abusive preface upon the audience and reader.'

' Immediately upon this, he wrote his memorable ode against the publick, beginning

- " Come, leave the loathed stage,
- " And the more loathsome age," &c.

The revenge he took against *Ford*, was to write an epigram on him as a plagiarist.

- " *Playwright*, by chance, hearing *toys* I had writ,
- " Cry'd to my face—they were th' elixir of wit:
- " And I must now believe him, for to-day
- " Five of my *jest*s, then stoln, pass'd him a play."

alluding to a character in the *Ladies Trial*, which *Ben* says *Ford* stole from him.'

' The next charge against *Ford* was, that the *Lover's Melancholy* was not his own, but purloined from *Shakspeare's* *papers*, by the connivance of *Heminge* and *Condell*, who in conjunction with *Ford*, had the revival of them.'

' The

If tragedies might any prologue have,

All those he made would scarce make one to this;
Where fame, now that he gone is to the grave,

(Death's publick tyring-house) the Nuntius is:

For, though his line of life went soon about,

The life yet of his lines shall never out.

HUGH HOLLAND^r.

To

'The malice of this charge is gravely refuted, and afterwards laughed at in many verses and epigrams, the best of which are those that follow, with which I shall close this theatrical extract.'

"To my worthy friend, *John Ford*.

"'Tis said, from Shakspeare's mine your play you drew;

"What need?—when Shakspeare still survives in you:

"But grant it were from his vast treasury reft,

"That *plund'rer Ben* ne'er made *so rich a theft*."

Thomas May.

Upon *Ben Jonson*, and his *Zany*, *Tom Randolph*.

"Quoth *Ben* to *Tom*, the *Lower's* stole,

"'Tis *Shakspeare's* every word;

"Indeed, says *Tom*, upon the whole,

"'Tis much too good for *Ford*.

"Thus *Ben* and *Tom* the *dead* still praise,

"The *living* to decry;

"For none must dare to wear the bays,

"Till *Ben* and *Tom* both die.

"Even *Avon's* *swan* could not escape

"These letter-tyrant elves;

"They on his fame contriv'd a rape,

"To raise their pedant selves.

"But after times with full consent

"This truth will all acknowledge,—

"*Shakspeare* and *Ford* from heaven were sent,

"But *Ben* and *Tom* from college."

Endymion Porter.

Mr. Macklin the comedian was the author of this letter; but the pamphlet which furnished his materials, was lost in its passage from Ireland.

The following stanza, from a copy of verses by Shirley, prefixed to *Ford's Love's Sacrifice*, 1633, alludes to the same dispute, and is apparently addressed to *Ben Jonson*:

"Look here *thou* that hast malice to the stage,

"And impudence enough for the whole age;

"*Voluminously*

To the Memory of
the deceased Authour, Master W. SHAKSPEARE.

Shakspeare, at length thy pious fellows give
The world thy works; thy works, by which outlive
Thy tomb, thy name must: when that stone is rent,
And time dissolves thy Stratford monument,
Here we alive shall view thee still; this book,
When brass and marble fade, shall make thee look
Fresh to all ages; when posterity
Shall loath what's new, think all is prodigy
That is not Shakspeare's, every line, each verse,
Here shall revive, redeem thee from thy herse.
Nor fire, nor cank'ring age,—as Naso said
Of his,—thy wit-fraught book shall once invade:
Nor shall I e'er believe or think thee dead,
Though mis'd, until our bankrout stage be sped
(Impossible) with some new strain to out-do
Passions of Juliet, and her Romeo;
Or till I hear a scene more nobly take,
Than when thy half-sword parlying Romans spake:
Till these, till any of thy volume's rest,
Shall with more fire, more feeling, be express'd,
Be sure, our Shakspeare, thou canst never die,
But, crown'd with laurel, live eternally.

L. DIGGES².

To the Memory of Master W. SHAKSPEARE.

We wonder'd, Shakspeare, that thou went'st so soon
From the world's stage to the grave's tyring-room:

“*Voluminously ignorant! be vext*

“*To read this tragedy, and thy owne be next.*”

STEEVENS.

¹ See Wood's *Athenæ Oxon.* edit. 1721, Vol. I. p. 583.

STEEVENS.

² See Wood's *Athenæ Oxonienses*, Vol. I. p. 599, and 600, edit. 1721. His translation of Claudian's *Rape of Proserpine* was entered on the Stationers' books, Oct. 4, 1617. STEEVENS.

It was printed in the same year. MALONE.

We thought thee dead ; but this thy printed worth
 Tells thy spectators, that thou went'st but forth
 To enter with applause : an actor's art
 Can die, and live to act a second part ;
 That's but an exit of mortality,
 This a re-entrance to a plaudite.

J. M³.

Upon the Effigies of my worthy Friend,
 the Authour, Master WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE, and
 his Works.

Spectator, this life's shadow is ;—to see
 The truer image, and a livelier he,
 Turn reader : but observe his comick vein,
 Laugh ; and proceed next to a tragick strain,
 Then weep : so,—when thou find'st two contraries,
 Two different passions from thy rapt soul rise,—
 Say, (who alone effect such wonders could)
 Rare Shakspeare to the life thou dost behold⁴.

On worthy Master SHAKSPEARE,
 and his Poems.

A mind reflecting ages past, whose clear
 And equal surface can make things appear,
 Distant a thousand years, and represent
 Them in their lively colours, just extent :
 To outrun hasty time, retrieve the fates,
 Roll back the heavens, blow ope the iron gates
 Of death and Lethe, where confused lie
 Great heaps of ruinous mortality :
 In that deep dusky dungeon, to discern
 A royal ghost from churls ; by art to learn
 The physiognomy of shades, and give
 Them sudden birth, wond'ring how oft they live ;

³ Perhaps John Marston. STEEVENS.

⁴ These verses first appeared in the folio, 1632. There is no name subscribed to them. MALONE.

What story coldly tells, what poets feign
 At second hand, and picture without brain,
 Senseless and soul-less shews : To give a stage,—
 Ample, and true with life,—voice, action, age,
 As Plato's year, and new scene of the world,
 Them unto us, or us to them had hurl'd :
 To raise our ancient sovereigns from their herse,
 Make kings his subjects ; by exchanging verse
 Enlive their pale trunks, that the present age
 Joys in their joy, and trembles at their rage :
 Yet so to temper passion, that our ears
 Take pleasure in their pain, and eyes in tears
 Both weep and smile ; fearful at plots so sad,
 Then laughing at our fear ; abus'd, and glad
 To be abus'd ; affected with that truth
 Which we perceive is false, pleas'd in that ruth
 At which we start, and, by elaborate play,
 Tortur'd and tickl'd ; by a crab-like way
 Time past made pastime, and in ugly sort
 Disgorging up his ravin for our sport :—
 —While the plebeian imp, from lofty throne,
 Creates and rules a world, and works upon
 Mankind by secret engines ; now to move
 A chilling pity, then a rigorous love ;
 To strike up and stroak down, both joy and ire ;
 To steer the affections ; and by heavenly fire
 Mold us anew, stoln from ourselves :—

This,—and much more, which cannot be express'd
 But by himself, his tongue, and his own breast,—
 Was Shakspeare's freehold ; which his cunning brain
 Improv'd by favour of the nine-fold train ;—
 The buskin'd muse, the comick queen, the grand
 And louder tone of Clio, nimble hand
 And nimbler foot of the melodious pair,
 The silver-voiced lady, the most fair
 Calliope, whose speaking silence daunts,
 And she whose praise the heavenly body chants,
 These jointly woo'd him, envying one another ;—
 Obey'd by all as spouse, but lov'd as brother ;—

And

And wrought a curious robe, of sable grave,
 Fresh green, and pleasant yellow, red most brave,
 And constant blue, rich purple, guiltless white,
 The lowly russet, and the scarlet bright:
 Branch'd and embroider'd like the painted spring;
 Each leaf match'd with a flower, and each string
 Of golden wire, each line of silk: there run
 Italian works, whose thread the sisters spun;
 And there did sing, or seem to sing, the choice
 Birds of a foreign note and various voice:
 Here hangs a mossy rock; there plays a fair
 But chiding fountain, purl'd: not the air,
 Nor clouds, nor thunder, but were living drawn;
 Not out of common tiffany or lawn,
 But fine materials, which the muses know,
 And only know the countries where they grow.

Now, when they could no longer him enjoy,
 In mortal garments pent,—death may destroy,
 They say, his body; but his verse shall live,
 And more than nature takes our hands shall give:
 In a less volume, but more strongly bound,
 Shakspeare shall breathe and speak; with laurel crown'd,
 Which never fades; fed with ambrosian meat,
 In a well-lined vesture, rich, and neat:
 So with this robe they cloath him, bid him wear it;
 For time shall never stain, nor envy tear it.

The friendly Admirer of his Endowments,

J. M. S.

A Remembrance of some English poets. By Richard
 Barnefield, 1598.

And Shakspeare thou, whose honey-flowing vein
 (Pleasing the world,) thy praises doth contain,
 Whose *Venus*, and whose *Lucrece*, sweet and chaste,
 Thy name in fame's immortal book hath plac'd,
 Live ever you, at least in fame live ever!
 Well may the body die, but fame die never.

England's Mourning Garment, &c. 1603.

Nor doth the silver-tongued Melicert
 Drop from his honied muse one fable tear,
 To mourn her death that graced his desert,
 And to his laies open'd her royal ear.
 Shepherd, remember our Elizabeth,
 And sing her *Rape*, done by that *Tarquin*, death.

To Master W. SHAKSPEARE.

Shakspeare, that nimble Mercury thy braine
 Lulls many-hundred Argus' eyes asleepe,
 So fit for all thou fashionest thy vaine,
 At the horse-foot fountaine thou hast drunk full deepe.
 Vertue's or vice's theme to thee all one is ;
 Who loves chaste life, there's *Lucrece* for a teacher :
 Who list read lust, there's *Venus* and *Adonis*,
 True modell of a most lascivious leacher.
 Besides, in plaies thy wit winds like Meander,
 When needy new composers borrow more
 Than Terence doth from Plautus or Menander :
 But to praise thee aright, I want thy store.
 Then let thine owne works thine owne worth upraise,
 And help to adorne thee with deserved baies.

Epigram 92, in an ancient collection, entitled *Run
 and a great Cast*, 4to. by Tho. Freeman, 1614.

Extract from Michael Drayton's "Elegy to Henry Reynolds, Esq. of Poets and Poesy."

Shakspeare, thou hadst as smooth a comick vein,
 Fitting the sock, and in thy natural brain
 As strong conception, and as clear a rage,
 As any one that traffick'd with the stage.

An Epitaph on the

Admirable Dramatick Poet, W. SHAKSPEARE.

What needs my Shakspeare for his honour'd bones,
 The labour of an age in piled stones;
 Or that his hallow'd reliques should be hid
 Under a star-ypointing pyramid?
 Dear son of memory, great heir of fame,
 What need'st thou such weak witnesses of thy name?
 Thou, in our wonder and astonishment,
 Hast built thyself a live-long monument:
 For whilst, to the shame of slow-endeavouring art,
 Thy easy numbers flow; and that each heart
 Hath, from the leaves of thy unvalued book,
 Those Delphick lines with deep impressiion took;
 Then thou, our fancy of itself bereaving*,
 Dost make us marble with too much conceiving;
 And, so sepulcher'd, in such pomp dost lie,
 That kings, for such a tomb, would wish to die.

JOHN MILTON⁴.

Upon Master WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE,
 the deceased aithour.

Poets are born, not made. When I would prove
 This truth, the glad remembrance I must love
 Of never-dying Shakspeare, who alone
 Is argument enough to make that one.
 First, that he was a poet, none would doubt
 That heard the applause of what he sees set out

* — of itself bereaving,] So the copy in Milton's Poems, printed by Mofely in 1645. That in the second folio, 1632, has—of herself bereaving. MALONE.

⁴ These verses were written by Milton in the year 1630. Notwithstanding this just elogium, and though the writer of it appears to have been a very diligent reader of the works of our poet, from whose rich garden he has plucked many a flower, in the true spirit of four puritanical sanctity he censured King Charles I. for having made this "great heir of fame" the *closet companion of his solitudes*. See his ΕΙΧΑΥΟ-κλαςς. MALONE.

Imprinted ; where thou hast (I will not say,
 Reader, his *works*, for, to contrive a play,
 To him 'twas none) the pattern of all wit,
 Art without art, unparallel'd as yet.
 Next Nature only help'd him, for look thorough
 This whole book⁵, thou shalt find he doth not borrow
 One phrase from Greeks, nor Latins imitate,
 Nor once from vulgar languages translate ;
 Nor plagiary-like from others glean,
 Nor begs he from each witty friend a scene,
 To piece his acts with : all that he doth write
 Is pure his own ; plot, language, exquisite.
 But O what praise more powerful can we give
 The dead, than that, by him, the *king's-men* live,
 His players ; which should they but have shar'd his fate,
 (All else expir'd within the short term's date)
 How could *The Globe* have prosper'd, since through want
 Of change, the plays and poems had grown scant.
 But, happy verse, thou shalt be sung and hear'd,
 When hungry quills shall be such honour barr'd.
 Then vanish, upstart writers to each stage,
 You needy poetasters of this age !
 Where Shakspeare liv'd or spake, Vermin, forbear !
 Lest with your froth ye spot them, come not near !
 But if you needs must write, if poverty
 So pinch, that otherwise you starve and die ;
 On God's name may the *Bull* or *Cockpit* have
 Your lame blank verse, to keep you from the grave :
 Or let new *Fortune's*⁶ younger brethren see,
 What they can pick from your lean industry.
 I do not wonder when you offer at
Black-friars, that you suffer : 'tis the fate

⁵ From this and the following lines it is probable that these verses were intended to be prefixed to the folio edition of our authour's plays. MALONE.

⁶ This, I believe, alludes to some of the company of *The Fortune* playhouse, who removed to the *Red Bull*. See a Prologue on the removing of the late *Fortune* players to *The Bull*. Tatham's *Fancies Theatre*, 1640. MALONE.

Of richer veins; prime judgments, that have far'd
 The worse, with this deceased man compar'd.
 So have I seen, when *Cæsar* would appear,
 And on the stage at half-sword parley were
Brutus and *Cassius*, O how the audience
 Were ravish'd! with what wonder they went thence!
 When, some new day, they would not brook a line
 Of tedious, though well-labour'd, *Catiline*;
Sejanus too was irksome; they priz'd more
 "Honest" *Jago*, or the jealous *Moor*.
 And though the *Fox* and subtil *Alchymist*,
 Long intermitted, could not quite be mist,
 Though these have sham'd all th' ancients, and might raise
 Their authour's merit with a crown of bays,
 Yet these sometimes, even at a friend's desire
 Acted, have scarce defray'd the sea-coal fire,
 And door-keepers: when, let but *Falstaff* come,
Hal, *Poins*, the rest,—you scarce shall have a room,
 All is so pester'd: Let but *Beatrice*
 And *Benedick* be seen, lo! in a trice
 The cock-pit, galleries, boxes, all are full,
 To hear *Malvolio*, that cross-garter'd gull.
 Brief, there is nothing in his wit-fraught book,
 Whose sound we would not hear, on whose worth look:
 Like old-coin'd gold, whose lines, in every page,
 Shall pass true current to succeeding age.
 But why do I dead *Shakspeare's* praise recite?
 Some second *Shakspeare* must of *Shakspeare* write;
 For me, 'tis needless; since an host of men
 Will pay, to clap his praise, to free my pen⁷.

LEON. DIGGES.

An Elegy on the death of that famous writer and actor,
 Mr. WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE.

I dare not do thy memory that wrong,
 Unto our larger griefs to give a tongue.

⁷ These verses are prefixed to a spurious edition of Shakspeare's poems, in small octavo, printed in 1640. MALONE.

I'll only sigh in earnest, and let fall
 My solemn tears at thy great funeral.
 For every eye that rains a show'r for thee,
 Laments thy loss in a sad elegy.
 Nor is it fit each humble muse should have
 Thy worth his subject, now thou art laid in grave.
 No, it's a flight beyond the pitch of those,
 Whose worth-less pamphlets are not sense in prose.
 Let learned *Jonson* sing a dirge for thee,
 And fill our orb with mournful harmony:
 But we need no remembrancer; thy fame
 Shall still accompany thy honour'd name
 To all posterity; and make us be
 Sensible of what we lost, in losing thee:
 Being the age's wonder; whose smooth rhimes
 Did more reform than lash the looser times.
 Nature herself did her own self admire,
 As oft as thou wert pleased to attire
 Her in her native lustre; and confess,
 Thy dressing was her chiefest comeliness.
 How can we then forget thee, when the age
 Her chiefest tutor, and the widow'd stage
 Her only favorite, in thee, hath lost,
 And Nature's self, what she did brag of most?
 Sleep then, rich soul of numbers! whilst poor we
 Enjoy the profits of thy legacy;
 And think it happiness enough, we have
 So much of thee redeemed from the grave,
 As may suffice to enlighten future times
 With the bright lustre of thy matchless rhimes³.

In Memory of our famous SHAKSPEARE.

Sacred Spirit, whiles thy lyre
 Echoed o'er the Arcadian plains,
 Even Apollo did admire,
 Orpheus wonder'd at thy strains:

³ These anonymous verses are likewise prefixed to Shakspeare's Poems, 1640, MALONE.

Plautus sigh'd, Sophocles wept
Tears of anger, for to hear,
After they so long had slept,
So bright a genius should appear ;
Who wrote his lines with a sun-beam,
More durable than time or fate :—
Others boldly do blaspheme,
Like those that seem to preach, but prate.

Thou wert truly priest elect,
Chosen darling to the Nine,
Such a trophy to erect
By thy wit and skill divine,
That were all their other glories
(Thine excepted) torn away,
By thy admirable stories
Their garments ever shall be gay.

Where thy honour'd bones do lie,
(As Statius once to Maro's urn,)
Thither every year will I
Slowly tread, and sadly mourn.

S. SHEPPARD⁹.

In remembrance of Master WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE.
Ode.

I.

Beware, delighted poets, when you sing,
To welcome nature in the early spring,
Your num'rous feet not tread
The banks of Avon ; for each flow'r,
As it ne'er knew a sun or show'r,
Hangs there the pensive head.

⁹ This authour published a small volume of *Epigrams* in 1651, among which this poem in memory of Shakspeare is found. MALONE.

II.

Each tree, whose thick and spreading growth hath made
 Rather a night beneath the boughs than shade,
 Unwilling now to grow,
 Looks like the plume a captain wears,
 Whose rifled *falls* are steep'd i'the tears
 Which from his last rage flow.

III.

The piteous river wept itself away
 Long since alas ! to such a swift decay,
 That reach the map, and look
 If you a river there can spy,
 And, for a river, your mock'd eye
 Will find a shallow brook.

WILLIAM D'AVENANT.

Part of Shirley's Prologue to *The Sisters*.

And if you leave us too, we cannot thrive,
 I'll promise neither play nor poet live
 Till ye come back : think what you do ; you see
 What audience we have : what company
 To Shakspeare comes ? whose mirth did once beguile
 Dull hours, and buskin'd, made even sorrow smile :
 So lovely were the wounds, that men would say
 They could endure the bleeding a whole day.

See, my lov'd Britons, see your Shakspeare rise,
 An awful ghost, confess'd to human eyes !
 Unnam'd, methinks, distinguish'd I had been
 From other shades, by this eternal green,
 About whose wreaths the vulgar poets strive,
 And with a touch their wither'd bays revive.
 Untaught, unpractis'd, in a barbarous age,
 I found not, but created first the stage :
 And if I drain'd no Greek or Latin store,
 'Twas, that my own abundance gave me more :

On

On foreign trade I needed not rely,
Like fruitful Britain rich without supply.

Dryden's Prologue to his alteration of *Troilus and Cressida*.

Shakspeare, who (taught by none) did first impart
To Fletcher wit, to labouring Jonson art:
He, monarch-like, gave those his subjects law,
And is that nature which they paint and draw.
Fletcher reach'd that which on his heights did grow,
Whilst Jonson crept and gather'd all below.
This did his love, and this his mirth digest:
One imitates him most, the other best.
If they have since out-writ all other men,
'Tis with the drops which fell from Shakspeare's pen.
Dryden's Prologue to his *Alteration of the Tempest*.

Our Shakspeare wrote too in an age as blest,
The happiest poet of his time, and best;
A gracious prince's favour cheer'd his muse,
A constant favour he ne'er fear'd to lose:
Therefore he wrote with fancy unconfin'd,
And thoughts that were immortal as his mind.
Otway's Prologue to *Caius Marius*.

Shakspeare, whose genius to itself a law,
Could men in every height of nature draw.
Rowe's Prologue to the *Ambitious Stepmother*.

In such an age immortal Shakspeare wrote,
By no quaint rules nor hamp'ring criticks taught;
With rough majestick force he mov'd the heart,
And strength and nature made amends for art.
Rowe's Prologue to *Jane Shore*.

Shakspeare, the genius of our isle, whose mind
(The universal mirror of mankind)

Express'd

Express'd all images, enrich'd the stage,
 But sometimes stoop'd to please a barb'rous age:
 When his immortal bays began to grow,
 Rude was the language, and the humour low.
 He, like the god of day, was always bright;
 But rolling in its course, his orb of light
 Was fully'd and obscur'd, though soaring high,
 With spots contracted from the nether sky.
 But whither is the advent'rous muse betray'd?
 Forgive her rashness, venerable shade!
 May spring with purple flowers perfume thy urn,
 And Avon with his greens thy grave adorn!
 Be all thy faults, whatever faults there be,
 Imputed to the times, and not to thee!

Some scions shot from this immortal root,
 Their tops much lower, and less fair the fruit.
 Jonson the tribute of my verse might claim,
 Had he not strove to blemish Shakspeare's name.
 But like the radiant twins that gild the sphere,
 Fletcher and Beaumont next in pomp appear.

Fenton's Epistle to Southerne, 1711.

————— For lofty sense,
 Creative fancy, and inspection keen
 Through the deep windings of the human heart,
 Is not wild Shakspeare thine and nature's boast?
 Thomson's Summer.

Shakspeare (whom you and every play-house bill
 Style the divine, the matchless, what you will,)
 For gain, not glory, wing'd his roving flight,
 And grew immortal in his own despoight.
 Pope's Imitation of Horace's Epistle to Augustus.

An Inscription for a Monument of SHAKSPEARE.
 O youths and virgins: O declining eld:
 O pale misfortune's slaves: O ye who dwell
 Unknown with humble quiet; ye who wait
 In courts, or fill the golden seat of kings:

O sons

O sons of sport and pleasure ; O thou wretch
 That weep'it for jealous love, or the sore wounds
 Of conscious guilt, or death's rapacious hand,
 Which left thee void of hope : O ye who roam
 In exile ; ye who through the embattled field
 Seek bright renown ; or who for nobler palms
 Contend, the leaders of a publick cause ;
 Approach : behold this marble. Know ye not
 The features ? Hath not oft his faithful tongue
 Told you the fashion of your own estate,
 The secrets of your bosom ? Here then, round
 His monument with reverence while ye stand,
 Say to each other : " This was Shakspeare's form ;
 " Who walk'd in every path of human life,
 " Felt every passion ; and to all mankind
 " Doth now, will ever, that experience yield
 " Which his own genius only could acquire."

AKENSIDE.

From the same Author's Pleasures of Imagination, B. III.

—————when lightning fires
 The arch of heaven, and thunders rock the ground,
 When furious whirlwinds rend the howling air,
 And ocean, groaning from his lowest bed,
 Heaves his tempestuous billows to the sky ;
 Amid the mighty uproar, while below
 The nations tremble, Shakspeare looks abroad
 From some high cliff, superior, and enjoys
 The elemental war.

From the Remonstrance of SHAKSPEARE,
 Supposed to have been spoken at the Theatre-Royal,
 when the French Comedians were acting by subscription.

By the same author.

What though the footsteps of my devious muse
 The measur'd walks of Grecian art refuse ?
 Or though the frankness of my hardy style
 Mock the nice touches of the critick's file ?

Yet

Yet what my age and climate held to view
 Impartial I survey'd, and fearless drew.
 And say, ye skilfull in the human heart,
 Who know to prize a poet's noblest part,
 What age, what clime, could e'er an ampler field
 For lofty thought, for daring fancy yield?
 I saw this England break the shamefull bands
 Forg'd for the souls of men by sacred hands;
 I saw each groaning realm her aid implore;
 Her sons the heroes of each warlike shore;
 Her naval standard, (the dire Spaniard's bane,)
 Obey'd through all the circuit of the main.
 Then too great commerce, for a late found world,
 Around your coast her eager sails unfurl'd:
 New hopes, new passions, thence the bosom fir'd;
 New plans, new arts, the genius thence inspir'd;
 Thence every scene which private fortune knows,
 In stronger life, with bolder spirit, rose.

Disgrac'd I this full prospect which I drew?
 My colours languid, or my strokes untrue?
 Have not your sages, warriors, swains, and kings,
 Confess'd the living draught of men and things?
 What other bard in any clime appears,
 Alike the master of your smiles and tears?
 Yet have I deign'd your audience to entice
 With wretched bribes to luxury and vice?
 Or have my various scenes a purpose known,
 Which freedom, virtue, glory, might not own?

When learning's triumph o'er her barb'rous foes
 First rear'd the stage, immortal Shakspeare rose;
 Each change of many-colour'd life he drew,
 Exhausted worlds, and then imagin'd new:
 Existence saw him spurn her bounded reign,
 And panting time toil'd after him in vain:
 His pow'rful strokes presiding truth impress'd,
 And unresisted passion storm'd the breast.

Prologue at the opening of Drury-Lane Theatre in 1747.

By Dr. Samuel Johnson,

Upon

Upon Shakspeare's Monument at Stratford-upon-Avon.

Great Homer's birth seven rival cities claim ;
 Too mighty such monopoly of fame.
 Yet not to birth alone did Homer owe
 His wond'rous worth ; what Egypt could bestow,
 With all the schools of Greece and Asia join'd,
 Enlarg'd the immense expansion of his mind :
 Nor yet unrival'd the Mæonian strain ;
 The British Eagle¹ and the Mantuan Swan
 Tow'r equal heights. But, happier Stratford, thou
 With incontest'd laurels deck thy brow ;
 Thy bard was thine *unschool'd*, and from thee brought
 More than all Egypt, Greece, or Asia taught ;
 Not Homer's self such matchless laurels won ;
 'The Greek has rivals, but thy Shakspeare none.

T. SEWARD.

From Mr. Collins's Epistle to Sir Thomas Hanmer on
 his edition of Shakspeare's works.

Hard was the lot those injur'd strains endur'd,
 Unown'd by science, and by years obscur'd :
 Fair Fancy wept ; and echoing sighs confess'd
 A fixt despair in every tuneful breast.
 Not with more grief the afflicted swains appear,
 When wintry winds deform the plenteous year ;
 When lingering frosts the ruin'd seats invade
 Where Peace resorted, and the Graces play'd.

Each rising art by just gradation moves,
 Toil builds on toil, and age on age improves :
 The muse alone unequal dealt her rage,
 And grac'd with noblest pomp her earliest stage.
 Preserv'd through time, the speaking scenes impart
 Each changeful wish of Phædra's tortur'd heart ;
 Or paint the curse, that mark'd the Theban's² reign,
 A bed incestuous, and a father slain.
 With kind concern our pitying eyes o'erflow,
 Trace the sad tale, and own another's woe.

¹ Milton.

² The Oedipus of Sophocles.

To Rome remov'd, with wit secure to please,
 The comick sisters kept their native ease.
 With jealous fear declining Greece beheld
 Her own Menander's art almost excell'd:
 But every Muse essay'd to raise in vain
 Some labour'd rival of her tragick strain;
 Illyssus' laurels, though transferr'd with toil,
 Droop'd their fair leaves, nor knew th' unfriendly foil.

As arts expir'd, resistless Dulness rose;
 Goths, priests, or Vandals,—all were learning's foes.
 Till Julius³ first recall'd each exil'd maid,
 And Cosmo own'd them in the Etrurian shade:
 Then deeply skill'd in love's engaging theme,
 The soft Provencial pass'd to Arno's stream:
 With graceful ease the wanton lyre he strung;
 Sweet flow'd the lays,—but love was all he sung.
 The gay description could not fail to move;
 For, led by nature, all are friends to love.

But heaven, still various in its works, decreed
 The perfect boast of time should last succeed.
 The beauteous union must appear at length,
 Of Tuscan fancy, and Athenian strength:
 One greater Muse Eliza's reign adorn,
 And even a Shakspeare to her fame be born.

Yet ah! so bright her morning's opening ray,
 In vain our Britain hop'd an equal day.
 No second growth the western isle could bear,
 At once exhausted with too rich a year.
 Too nicely Jonson knew the critick's part;
 Nature in him was almost lost in art.
 Of softer mold the gentle Fletcher came,
 The next in order; as the next in name.
 With pleas'd attention 'midst his scenes we find
 Each glowing thought, that warms the female mind;
 Each melting sigh, and every tender tear,
 The lover's wishes, and the virgin's fear.

³ Julius II, the immediate predecessor of Leo X.

His every strain the Smiles and Graces own⁴;
 But stronger Shakspeare felt for man alone:
 Drawn by his pen, our ruder passions stand
 Th' unrivall'd picture of his early hand.

With gradual steps⁵, and slow, exacter France
 Saw Art's fair empire o'er her shores advance:
 By length of toil a bright perfection knew,
 Correctly bold, and just in all she drew:
 Till late Corneille, with Lucan's⁶ spirit fir'd,
 Breath'd the free strain, as Rome and He inspir'd;
 And claffick judgment gain'd to sweet Racine
 The temperate strength of Maro's chaster line.

But wilder far the British laurel spread,
 And wreaths less artful crown our poet's head.
 Yet He alone to every scene could give
 The historian's truth, and bid the manners live.
 Wak'd at his call I view, with glad surprize,
 Majestick forms of mighty monarchs rise.
 There Henry's trumpets spread their loud alarms,
 And laurel'd Conquest waits her hero's arms.
 Here gentler Edward claims a pitying sigh,
 Scarce born to honours, and so soon to die!
 Yet shall thy throne, unhappy infant, bring
 No beam of comfort to the guilty king:
 The time shall come⁷, when Glo'ster's heart shall bleed
 In life's last hours, with horror of the deed:
 When dreary visions shall at last present
 Thy vengeful image in the midnight tent:
 Thy hand unseen the secret death shall bear,
 Blunt the weak sword, and break the oppressive spear.

⁴ Their characters are thus distinguished by Mr. Dryden.

⁵ About the time of Shakspeare, the poet Hardy was in great repute in France. He wrote, according to Fontenelle, six hundred plays. The French poets after him applied themselves in general to the correct improvement of the stage, which was almost totally disregarded by those of our own country, Johnson excepted.

⁶ The favourite author of the elder Corneille.

⁷ Turno tempus erit, magno cum optaverit emptum
 Intactum pallanta, &c.

Where'er we turn, by fancy charm'd, we find
Some sweet illusion of the cheated mind.

Oft, wild of wing, she calls the soul to rove
With humbler nature, in the rural grove;
Where swains contented own the quiet scene,
And twilight fairies tread the circled green:
Dress'd by her hand, the woods and vallies smile;
And Spring diffusive decks the enchanted isle.

O more than all in powerful genius blest,
Come, take thine empire o'er the willing breast!
Whate'er the wounds this youthful heart shall feel,
Thy songs support me, and thy morals heal.
There every thought the poet's warmth may raise,
There native musick dwells in all the lays.
O might some verse with happiest skill persuade
Expressive Picture to adopt thine aid!
What wondrous draughts might rise from every page!
What other Raphaels charm a distant age!

Methinks even now I view some free design,
Where breathing Nature lives in every line:
Chaste and subdued the modest lights decay,
Steal into shades, and mildly melt away.
—And see, where Anthony^s, in tears approv'd,
Guards the pale relicks of the chief he lov'd:
O'er the cold corse the warrior seems to bend,
Deep sunk in grief, and mourns his murder'd friend!
Still as they press, he calls on all around,
Lifts the torn robe, and points the bleeding wound.

But who is he^o, whose brows exalted bear
A wrath impatient, and a fiercer air?
Awake to all that injur'd worth can feel,
On his own Rome he turn the avenging steel.
Yet shall not war's insatiate fury fall
(So heaven ordains it) on the destin'd wall.
See the fond mother, 'midst the plaintive train,
Hung on his knees, and prostrate on the plain!

^s See the tragedy of Julius Cæsar.

^o Coriolanus. See Mr. Spence's dialogue on the Odyssey.

Touch'd to the soul, in vain he strives to hide
 The son's affection, in the Roman's pride:
 O'er all the man conflicting passions rise,
 Rage grasps the sword, while Pity melts the eyes.

What are the lays of artful Addison,
 Coldly correct, to Shakspeare's warblings wild?
 Whom on the winding Avon's willow'd banks
 Fair Fancy found, and bore the smiling babe
 To a close cavern: (still the shepherds shew
 The sacred place, whence with religious awe
 They hear, returning from the field at eve,
 Strange whisp'ring of sweet musick through the air:)
 Here, as with honey gathered from the rock,
 She fed the little prattler, and with songs
 Oft sooth'd his wond'ring ears; with deep delight
 On her soft lap he sat, and caught the sounds.

The Enthusiast, or the Lover of Nature, a Poem, by the
 Rev. Joseph Warton.

From the Rev. Thomas Warton's Address to the Queen
 on her Marriage.

Here, boldly mark'd with every living hue,
 Nature's unbounded portrait Shakspeare drew:
 But chief, the dreadful groupe of human woes
 The daring artist's tragick pencil chose;
 Explor'd the pangs that rend the royal breast,
 Those wounds that lurk beneath the tissued vest.

Monody, written near Stratford-upon-Avon.

Avon, thy rural views, thy pastures wild,
 The willows that o'erhang thy twilight edge,
 Their boughs entangling with the embattled sedge;
 Thy brink with watery foliage quaintly fring'd,
 Thy surface with reflected verdure ting'd;
 Sooth me with many a pensive pleasure mild.

VOL. I.

[P]

But

But while I muse, that here the Bard Divine
 Whose sacred dust yon high-arch'd isles inclose,
 Where the tall windows rise in stately rows,
 Above th' embowering shade,
 Here first, at Fancy's fairy-circled shrine,
 Of daisies pied his infant offering made;
 Here playful yet, in stripling years unripe,
 Fram'd of thy reeds a shrill and artless pipe:
 Sudden thy beauties, Avon, all are fled,
 As at the waving of some magick wand;
 An holy trance my charmed spirit wings,
 And awful shapes of leaders and of kings,
 People the busy mead,
 Like spectres swarming to the wizard's hall;
 And slowly pace, and point with trembling hand
 The wounds ill-cover'd by the purple pall.
 Before me Pity seems to stand,
 A weeping mourner, smote with anguish sore,
 To see Misfortune rend in frantick mood
 His robe. with regal woes embroider'd o'er.
 Pale Terror leads the visionary band,
 And sternly shakes his sceptre, dropping blood.

By the same.

Far from the sun and summer gale,
 In thy green lap was Nature's darling laid,
 What time, where lucid Avon stray'd,
 To him the mighty mother did unveil
 Her awful face: The dauntless child
 Stretch'd forth his little arms, and smil'd.
 This pencil take (she said) whose colours clear
 Richly paint the vernal year:
 Thine too these golden keys, immortal boy!
 This can unlock the gates of joy;
 Of horror that, and thrilling fears,
 Or ope the sacred source of sympathetick tears.

Gray's Ode on the Progress of Poesy.

Next

Next Shakspeare sat, irregularly great,
 And in his hand a magick rod did hold,
 Which visionary beings did create,
 And turn the foulest dross to purest gold:
 Whatever spirits rove in earth or air,
 Or bad, or good, obey his dread command;
 To his behests these willingly repair,
 Those aw'd by terrors of his magick wand,
 The which not all their powers united might withstand.

Lloyd's Progress of Envy, 1751.

Oh, where's the bard, who at one view
 Could look the whole creation through,
 Who travers'd all the human heart,
 Without recourse to Grecian art?
 He scorn'd the rules of imitation,
 Of altering, pilfering, and translation,
 Nor painted horror, grief, or rage,
 From models of a former age;
 The bright original he took,
 And tore the leaf from nature's book.
 'Tis Shakspeare.—

Lloyd's Shakespeare, a Poem.

In the first feat, in robe of various dyes,
 A noble wildness flashing from his eyes,
 Sat Shakspeare.—In one hand a wand he bore,
 For mighty wonders fam'd in days of yore;
 The other held a globe, which to his will
 Obedient turn'd, and own'd a master's skill:
 Things of the noblest kind his genius drew,
 And look'd through nature at a single view:
 A loose he gave to his unbounded soul,
 And taught new lands to rise, new seas to roll;
 Call'd into being scenes unknown before,
 And, passing nature's bounds, was something more.

Churchill's Rosciad.

A LIST OF THE MOST
AUTHENTICK ANCIENT EDITIONS
O F


SHAKSPEARE'S PLAYS.

QUARTO EDITIONS.

- | | | |
|------|---|--|
| I. | { | 1. Romeo and Juliet, 1597, John Danter.
2. D°. 1599, Thomas Creede, for Cuthbert Burby.
3. D°. no date, John Smethwicke.
This play was reprinted in 1609 and 1637. |
| II. | { | King Richard II. 1597, Valentine Simmes, for Andrew Wife.
Reprinted in 1598, 1608, (with an additional scene) 1615, and 1634. |
| III. | { | King Richard III. 1597, Valentine Simmes, for Andrew Wife.
Reprinted in 1598, 1602, 1612, 1622, &c. |
| IV. | { | Love's Labour's Lost, 1598, W. W. for Cuthbert Burby. |
| V. | { | King Henry IV. First Part. 1598, P. S. for Andrew Wife.
Reprinted in 1599, 1604, 1608, 1613, &c. |
| VI. | { | 1. King Henry IV. Second Part. 1600, V. S. for Andrew Wife and William Aspley.
2. D°. 1600, D°.
In one of these editions Sign. E contains six leaves; in the other the usual number. |
| VII. | { | King Henry V. 1600, Thomas Creede, for Thomas Millington, and John Busby.
Reprinted in 1602, and 1608. |

VIII.

- VIII. { 1. *Midsummer-Night's Dream*, 1600, Thomas Fisher.
2. D°. 1600, James Roberts.
- IX. { 1. *Merchant of Venice*, 1600, I. R. for Thomas Heyes.
2. D°. 1600, James Roberts.
Reprinted in 1637, &c.
- X. { *Much Ado about Nothing*, 1600, V. S. for Andrew Wise and William Aspley.
- XI. { *Merry Wives of Windsor*, 1602, T. C. for Arthur Johnson.
Reprinted in 1619.
- XII. { 1. *Hamlet*, 1604, I. R. for N. L.
2. D°. no date, W. S. for John Smethwicke.
This play was reprinted in 1605, 1611, &c.
- XIII. { 1. *King Lear*, 1608, for Nathaniel Butter.
2. D°. 1608, for D°.
In one of these editions the first Signature is A; in the other B.
- XIV. { 1. *Troilus and Cressida*, 1609, G. Eld, for R. Bonian and H. Whalley, with a Preface.
2. D°. for D°. by the King's Majesties Servants at the Globe, no date.
- XV. *Titus Andronicus*, 1611, Edward White.
- XVI. { 1. *Othello*, 1622, N. O. for Thomas Walkely.
2. D°. no date, Thomas Walkely¹.

 Of all the remaining plays the only authentick copy is the first complete collection of our authour's dramas printed in folio in 1623.

FOLIO EDITION.

Mr. William Shakspeare's Comedies, Histories, and Tragedies. Published according to the true original Copies. 1623. Isaac Jaggard and Ed. Blount.
Reprinted in 1632, 1664, and 1685. MALONE.

¹ This copy is in Mr. Pope's List, but I have never seen it.

MODERN EDITIONS.

Octavo, Rowe's, London, 1709. 7 Vols.
 Duodecimo, Rowe's, Ditto, 1714. 9 D°.
 Quarto, Pope's, Ditto, 1725. 6 D°.
 Duodecimo, Pope's, Ditto, 1728. 10 D°.
 Octavo, Theobald's, Ditto, 1733. 7 D°.
 Duodecimo, Theobald's, Ditto, 1740. 8 D°.
 Quarto, Hanmer's, Oxford, 1744. 6 D°.
 Octavo, Warburton's, London, 1747. 8 D°.
 Ditto, Johnson's, ditto, 1765. 8 D°.
 Ditto, Steevens's, ditto, 1766. 4 D°.
 Crown 8vo. Capell's, ditto, 1768. 10 D°.
 Quarto, Hanmer's, Oxford, 1771, 6 D°.
 Octavo, Johnson's and Steevens's, London, 1773. 10 D°.
 D°. second edition, ditto, 1778. 10 D°.
 D°. third edition, ditto, 1785. 10 D°.
 Crown octavo, Malone's, ditto, 1789. 10 D°.

MALONE.

The reader may not be displeased to know the exact sums paid to the different Editors of Shakspeare. The following account is taken from the books of the late Mr. Tonson.

To Mr. Rowe	—	£.	36	10	0
Mr. Hughes ²	—		28	7	0
Mr. Pope	—		217	12	0
Mr. Fenton ³	—		30	12	0
Mr. Gay ⁴	—		35	19	6
Mr. Whatley ⁵	—		12	0	0
Mr. Theobald ⁶	—		652	10	0
Mr. Warburton	—		560	0	0
Dr. Johnson ⁷					
Mr. Capell	—		300	0	0

Of

² For correcting the press and making an index to Mr. Rowe's 12mo edition. STEEVENS.

³ For assistance to Mr. Pope in correcting the press. STEEVENS.

⁴ For the same services. STEEVENS.

⁵ For correcting the sheets of Pope's 12mo. STEEVENS.

⁶ Of Mr. Theobald's edition no less than 11360 have been printed.

STEEVENS.

⁷ From

Of these editions some have passed several times through the press; but only such as vary from each other are here enumerated.

To this list might be added several spurious and mutilated impressions; but as they appear to have been executed without the smallest degree of skill either in the manners or language of the time of Shakspeare; and as the names of their respective editors are prudently concealed, it were useless to commemorate the number of their volumes, or the distinct date of each publication.

Some of our legitimate editions will afford a sufficient specimen of the fluctuation of price in books.—An ancient quarto was sold for six-pence; and the folios 1623 1632, when first printed, could not have been rated higher than at ten shillings each.—Very lately, one, and two guineas, have been paid for a quarto; the first folio is usually valued at seven or eight: but what price may be expected for it hereafter, is not very easy to be determined, the conscience of Mr. Fox, bookseller in Holborn, having lately permitted him to ask no less than *two guineas for two leaves* out of a mutilated copy of that impression, though he had several, almost equally defective, in his shop. The second folio is commonly rated at two or three guineas⁸.

At the late Mr. Jacob Tonson's sale, in the year 1767, one hundred and forty copies of Mr. Pope's edition of Shakspeare, in six volumes quarto, (for which the subscribers paid six guineas) were disposed of among the booksellers at sixteen shillings per set. Seven hundred and fifty of this edition were printed.

At the same sale, the remainder of Dr. Warburton's edition, in eight volumes 8vo. printed in 1747, (of which the original price was two pounds eight shillings, and

⁷ From the late Mr. Tonson's books it appears, that Dr. Johnson received copies of his edition for his subscribers, the first cost of which was 375*l.* and afterwards 105*l.* in money. Total, 480*l.* MALONE.

⁸ And is not worth three shillings. See an account of it, in the preface to the present edition. MALONE.

the number printed 1000) was sold off: viz. 178 copies, at eighteen shillings each.

On the contrary, Sir Thomas Hanmer's edition, printed at Oxford in 1744, which was first sold for three guineas, had arisen to nine or ten, before it was reprinted.

It appears however from the foregoing catalogue (when all reiterations of legitimate editions are taken into the account, together with five spurious ones printed in Ireland, one in Scotland, one at Birmingham, and four in London, making in the whole thirty-five impressions) that not less than 35,000 copies of our authour's works have been dispersed, exclusive of the quartos, single plays, and such as have been altered for the stage. Of the latter, as exact a list as I have been able to form, with the assistance of Mr. Reed of Staple Inn, (than whom no man is more conversant with English publications both ancient and modern, or more willing to assist the literary undertakings of others) will be found in the course of the following pages. STEEVENS.

A LIST OF THE MOST
AUTHENTICK ANCIENT EDITIONS
O F
SHAKSPEARE'S POEMS.

1. Venus and Adonis 1595, small octavo, or rather decimo sexto, R. F. for John Harrison.
This poem, I have no doubt, was printed in quarto in 1593 or 1594, though no copy of the edition is now known to be extant.
Reprinted in 1600, 1602, 1617, 1620, 1630, &c.
2. Lucrece, quarto, 1594, Richard Field, for John Harrison.
Reprinted in small octavo, in 1596, 1598, 1600, 1607, 1616, 1624, 1632, &c.
3. The Passionate Pilgrim, [being a collection of Poems by Shakspeare,] small octavo, 1599, for W. Jaggard; sold by William Leake.
4. The Passionate Pilgrime, or certain amorous Sonnets between Venus and Adonis, &c. The third edition, small octavo, 1612, W. Jaggard.
I know not when the second edition was printed.
5. Shakspeare's Sonnets, never before imprinted, quarto, 1609, G. Eld, for T. T.
An edition of Shakspeare's Sonnets, differing in many particulars from the original, and intermixed with the poems contained in *The Passionate Pilgrim*, and with several poems written by Thomas Heywood, was printed in 1640, in small octavo, by Thomas Cotes, sold by John Benson.

MODERN EDITIONS.

- Shakspeare's Poems, small octavo, for Bernard Lintot, no date, but printed in 1710.
The Sonnets in this edition were printed from the quarto of 1609; *Venus and Adonis*, and *Lucrece*, from very late editions, full of errors.

The

234 DRAMATICK PIECES, &c.

The Poems of William Shakspeare, containing his Venus and Adonis, Rape of Lucrece, Sonnets, Passionate Pilgrim, and A Lover's Complaint, printed from the authentick copies, by Malone, in octavo, in 1780.

D^o. Second Edition, with the authour's plays, crown octavo, 1789.

Spurious Editions of Shakspeare's Poems have also been published by Gildon, Sewell, Evans, &c.

MALONE.

DRAMATICK PIECES

ON WHICH

PLAYS WERE FORMED BY SHAKSPEARE.

- I. { The right excellent and famous historye of Promos and Cassandra, &c. by George Whetstone, 1578. Printed for Richard Ihones.
- II. { The first and second part of the troublesome raigne of John King of England, &c. As they were sundry times publickely acted by the Queenes Majesties players in the honourable citie of London, 1591, for Sampson Clarke.
Reprinted in 1611, and 1622.
- III. { Menæchmi, a pleasant and fine conceited comedie, &c. by W. W. 1595, Thomas Creede, for William Barley.
- IV. { The famous Victories of Henry the Fifth: Containing the honourable battle of Agincourt. As it was plaide by the Queenes Magesties players, 1598, Thomas Creede.
Reprinted in 1617.

- V. { 1. The first part of the contention betwixt the two famous houses of Yorke and Lancaster, with the death of the good duke Humphrey, &c. As it was sundry times acted by the right honourable the Earle of Pembroke his Servants, 1600, W. W. for Thomas Millington.
2. D^o. 1600, V. S. for Thomas Millington. This was reprinted for T. P. without date, but in fact in 1619.

- VI. { 1. The true tragedie of Richarde duke of Yorke, and the death of good king Henrie the Sixt, &c. As it was sundry times acted by the right honourable the Earl of Pembroke his Servants, 1600, W. W. for Thomas Millington.
2. D^o. 1600, V. S. for Thomas Millington. This was reprinted for T. P. without date, but in fact in 1619.

- VII. { The true chronicle history of King Leir and his three daughters, Gonorill, Ragan, and Cordelia, 1605, Simon Stafford, for John Wright.

- VIII. { A pleasaunt conceited Historie, called, The Taming of a Shrew. As it hath beene sundry times acted by the right honourable the Earle of Pembroke his Servants, 1607, V. S. for Nicholas Ling.

MALONE.

LIST OF PLAYS ALTERED FROM SHAKSPEARE.

INVENIES ETIAM DISJECTI MEMBRA POETAE.

Tempest.

The Tempest, or the Enchanted Island. A Comedy, acted in Dorset Garden. By Sir W. D'Avenant and Dryden. 4to. 1669.

The Tempest, made into an opera by Shadwell in 1673. See Downes, p. 34.

The Tempest, an Opera taken from Shakspeare. As it is performed at the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane. By Mr. Garrick. 8vo. 1756.

Two Gentlemen of Verona.

The Two Gentlemen of Verona. A Comedy written by Shakspeare, with alterations and additions, as it is performed at the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane. By Mr. Victor. 8vo. 1763.

Merry Wives of Windsor.

The Comical Gallant, or the Amours of Sir John Falstaffe. A Comedy, as it is acted at the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane, by his Majesties Servants. By Mr. Dennis. 4to. 1702.

Measure for Measure.

The Law against Lovers, by Sir William D'Avenant. Fol. 1673.

Measure for Measure, or Beauty the best Advocate. As it is acted at the Theatre in Lincolns Inn Fields; written originally by Mr. Shakspeare, and now very much altered: with additions of several Entertainments of Musick. By Mr. Gildon. 4to. 1700.

Comedy of Errors.

The Comedy of Errors, as it is acted at the Theatre Royal in Covent Garden. Altered by Mr. Hull.

Much Ado about Nothing.

The Law against Lovers. By Sir W. Davenant. Fol. 1673.

The Universal Passion. A Comedy as it is acted at the

PLAYS ALTERED FROM SHAKSPEARE. 237

the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane, by his Majesties Servants. By James Miller. 8vo. 1737.

Love's Labour's Lost.

The Students, a Comedy altered from Shakspeare's *Love's Labour's Lost*, and adapted to the stage. 8vo. 1762.

Midsummer-Night's Dream.

The Humours of Bottom the Weaver, by Robert Cox. 4to.

The Fairy Queen, an Opera, represented at the Queen's Theatre by their Majesties Servants. 4to. 1692.

Pyramus and Thisbe, a Comick Masque, written by Richard Leveridge, performed at Lincoln's Inn Fields. 8vo. 1716.

Pyramus and Thisbe, a Mock Opera, written by Shakspeare. Set to musick by Mr. Lampe. Performed at the Theatre Royal in Covent Garden. 8vo. 1745.

The Fairies, an Opera, taken from a *Midsummer-Night's Dream* written by Shakspeare, as it is performed at the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane. By Mr. Garrick. 8vo. 1755.

A *Midsummer-Night's Dream*, written by Shakspeare, with Alterations and Additions, and several new Songs. As it is performed at the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane. 8vo. 1763.

A Fairy Tale, in two acts, taken from Shakspeare. As it is performed at the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane. 8vo. 1763.

Merchant of Venice.

The Jew of Venice, a Comedy. As it is acted at the Theatre in Little Lincoln's Inn Fields, by his Majesty's Servants. By George Granville, Esq. (afterwards Lord Lansdowne.) 4to. 1701.

As you like it.

Love in a Forest, a Comedy. As it is acted at the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane, by his Majesty's Servants. By C. Johnson. 8vo. 1723.

The

238 PLAYS ALTERED FROM SHAKSPEARE.

The Modern Receipt, or a Cure for Love. A Comedy altered from Shakspeare. The Dedication is signed J. C. 12mo. 1739.

Taming of the Shrew.

Sawny the Scott, or the Taming of the Shrew; a Comedy, as it is now acted at the Theatre Royal, and never before printed. By John Lacy. 4to. 1698.

The Cobler of Preston, a Farce, as it is acted at the New Theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields. By Christopher Bullock. 12mo. 1716.

The Cobler of Preston, as it acted at the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane by his Majesty's Servants. By C. Johnson. 8vo. 1716.

A Cure for a Scold, a Ballad Opera, by James Worsdale, 8vo. Taken from the Taming of the Shrew. 12mo. 1738.

Catharine and Petruchio. By Mr. Garrick. 8vo. 1756.

Winter's Tale.

The Winter's Tale, a Play altered from Shakspeare. By Charles Marfh. 8vo. 1756.

Florizel and Perdita, by Mr. Garrick. 8vo. 1758.

Sheepshearing, or Florizel and Perdita, by ——. Dublin. 12mo. 1767.

The Sheep-shearing: a Dramatick Pastoral. In three acts. Taken from Shakspeare. As it is performed at the Theatre Royal in the Haymarket. 8vo. 1777.

Macbeth.

Macbeth, a Tragedy, with all the Alterations, Amendments, Additions, and new Songs; as it is now acted at the Duke's Theatre. By Sir William D'Avenant. 4to. 1674.

The Historical Tragedy of Macbeth (written originally by Shakspeare) newly adapted to the stage, with Alterations, as performed at the Theatre in Edinburgh. 8vo. 1753.

King

King John.

Papal Tyranny in the Reign of King John, a Tragedy; as it is acted at the Theatre Royal in Covent Garden, by his Majesty's Servants. By Colley Cibber. 8vo. 1744.

K. Richard II.

The History of King Richard the Second. Acted at the Theatre Royal under the title of the Sicilian Usurper: with a prefatory Epistle in vindication of the Author, occasioned by the Prohibition of his Play on the Stage. By N. Tate. 4to. 1681.

The Tragedy of King Richard II. altered from Shakspeare. By Lewis Theobald. 8vo. 1720.

King Richard II. a Tragedy, altered from Shakspeare, and the stile imitated. By James Goodhall. Printed at Manchester. 8vo. 1772.

King Henry IV. Part I.

King Henry IV. with the Humours of Sir John Falstaff, a Tragi-comedy, as it is acted at the Theatre in Little Lincoln's Inn Fields, by his Majesty's Servants. Revived with Alterations. By Mr. Betterton. 4to. 1700.

King Henry IV. Part II.

The Sequel of Henry IV. with the Humours of Sir John Falstaff and Justice Shallow; as it is acted by his Majesty's Company of Comedians at the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane. Altered from Shakspeare by the late Mr. Betterton. 8vo. No date.

King Henry VI. Three Parts.

Henry the Sixth, the First Part, with the Murder of Humphrey Duke of Gloucester. As it was acted at the Duke's Theatre. By John Crowne. 4to. 1681.

Henry the Sixth, the Second Part, or the Misery of Civil War. As it was acted at the Duke's Theatre. By John Crowne. 4to. 1681.

Humfrey

240 PLAYS ALTERED FROM SHAKSPEARE:

Humfrey Duke of Gloucester, a Tragedy, as it is acted at the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane by his Majesty's Servants. [A few speeches and lines *only* borrowed from Shakspeare.] By Ambrose Philips.

An Historical Tragedy of the Civil Wars in the Reign of King Henry VI. (being a Sequel to the Tragedy of Humfrey Duke of Gloucester, and an Introduction to the Tragical History of King Richard III.) Altered from Shakspeare in the year 1720. By Theo. Cibber. 8vo. No date.

King Richard III.

The Tragical History of King Richard III. Altered from Shakspeare. By Colley Cibber.

Coriolanus.

The Ingratitude of a Commonwealth, or the Fall of Caius Martius Coriolanus. As it is acted at the Theatre Royal. By Nahum Tate. 4to. 1682.

The Invader of his Country, or the Fatal Resentment. As it is acted at the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane, by his Majesty's Servants. By John Dennis. 8vo. 1720.

Coriolanus, or the Roman Matron, a Tragedy, taken from Shakspeare and Thomson. As it is acted at the Theatre Royal in Covent Garden: to which is added the Order of the Ovation. By Thomas Sheridan. 8vo. 1755.

Julius Cæsar.

The Tragedy of Julius Cæsar, with the Death of Brutus and Cassius: written originally by Shakspeare, and since altered by Sir William D'Avenant and John Dryden, Poets Laureat; as it is now acted by his Majesty's Company of Comedians at the Theatre Royal. To which is prefixed the Life of Julius Cæsar, abstracted from Plutarch and Suetonius. 12mo. 1719.

The Tragedy of Julius Cæsar, altered, with a Prologue and Chorus. 4to. 1722.

The Tragedy of Marcus Brutus, with the Prologue and the two last Chorusses. 4to. 1722. Both by John Sheffield Duke of Buckingham.

Antony

PLAYS ALTERED FROM SHAKSPEARE. 241

Antony and Cleopatra.

Antony and Cleopatra, an Historical Play, written by William Shakspeare, fitted for the stage by abridging only; and now acted at the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane by his Majesty's Servants. By Edward Capell. 12mo. 1758.

Timon of Athens.

The History of Timon of Athens, the Man-hater. As it is acted at the Duke's Theatre; made into a Play, by Tho. Shadwell. 4to. 1678.

Timon of Athens. As it is acted at the Theatre Royal on Richmond Green. Altered from Shakspeare and Shadwell. By James Love. 8vo. 1768.

Timon of Athens, altered from Shakspeare, a Tragedy, as it is acted at the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane. By Mr. Cumberland. 8vo. 1771.

Titus Andronicus.

Titus Andronicus, or the Rape of Lavinia. Acted at the Theatre Royal. A Tragedy, altered from Mr. Shakspeare's Works. By Edward Ravenscroft. 4to. 1687.

Troilus and Cressida.

Troilus and Cressida, or Truth found too late. A Tragedy, as it is acted at the Duke's Theatre. By John Dryden. 4to. 1679.

Cymbeline.

The Injured Princess, or the Fatal Wager. As it was acted at the Theatre Royal, by his Majesty's Servants. By Tho. Durfey. 4to. 1682.

Cymbeline, King of Great Britain, a Tragedy written by Shakspeare, with some alterations. By Charles Marsh. 8vo. 1755.

Cymbeline, a Tragedy, altered from Shakspeare. As it is performed at the Theatre Royal in Covent Garden. By W. Hawkins. 8vo. 1759.

Cymbeline, altered by Mr. Garrick in the same year.

King Lear.

The History of King Lear, acted at the Duke's Theatre. Revived with Alterations. By Nahum Tate. 4to. 1681.

The History of King Lear, as it is performed at the Theatre Royal in Covent Garden. By George Colman. 8vo. 1768.

Romeo and Juliet.

Romeo and Juliet, altered into a Tragi-comedy, by James Howard, Esq. See Downes, p. 22.

Caius Marius, by Tho. Otway, 4to. 1680.

Romeo and Juliet, a Tragedy, revised and altered from Shakspeare. By Theo. Cibber. 8vo. No date.

Romeo and Juliet, altered by Mr. Garrick. 12mo.

From the Preface to the Republication of Marth's Cymbeline in 1762, it appears that he had likewise made an alteration of Romeo and Juliet.

Hamlet.

Hamlet, altered by Mr. Garrick.

LIST OF DETACHED PIECES OF CRITICISM ON
SHAKSPEARE, HIS EDITORS, &c.

A short View of Tragedy; its original, excellency, and corruption. With some Reflections on Shakspeare and other Practitioners for the Stage. By Mr. Rymer, Servant to their Majesties. Small 8vo. 1695.

Some Reflections on Mr. Rymer's Short View of Tragedy, and an Attempt at a Vindication of Shakspeare, in an Essay directed to John Dryden, Esq. By Charles Gildon.—This tract is found only in Gildon's *Miscellaneous Letters and Essays on several subjects*, small 8vo. 1694.

Remarks on the Plays of Shakspeare. By C. Gildon, 8vo. Printed at the end of the seventh volume of Rowe's edition. 1710.

An Essay on the Genius and Writings of Shakspeare, with some Letters of Criticism to the Spectator. By Mr. Dennis. 8vo. 1712.

Shakspeare restored: or a Specimen of the many Errors as well committed as unamended, by Mr. Pope in his late Edition of this Poet. Designed not only to correct the said Edition, but to restore the true Reading of Shakspeare in all the Editions ever yet published. By Mr. Theobald. 4to. 1726.

An Answer to Mr. Pope's Preface to Shakspeare, in a letter to a friend, being a Vindication of the old Actors who were the publishers and performers of that Author's Plays. Whereby the Errors of their Edition are further accounted for, and some Memoirs of Shakspeare and the Stage History of his Time are inserted, which were never before collected and published. By a strolling Player. [John Roberts.] 8vo. 1729.

Some Remarks on the Tragedy of Hamlet Prince of Denmark, written by William Shakspeare. Printed for W. Wilkins in Lombard Street. 8vo. 1736.

244 CRITICISMS ON SHAKSPEARE, &c.

Explanatory and Critical Notes on divers Passages of Shakspeare's Plays, by Francis Peck. Printed with his "New Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Mr. John Milton." 4to. 1740.

An Essay towards fixing the true Standards of Wit and Humour, Raillery, Satire, and Ridicule: to which is added an Analysis of the Characters of an Humourist, Sir John Falstaff, Sir Roger de Coverley, and Don Quixote. [By Corbyn Morris, Esq.] 8vo. 1744.

Miscellaneous Observations on the Tragedy of Macbeth: with Remarks on Sir Thomas Hanmer's Edition of Shakspeare. To which is affixed—Proposals for a new Edition of Shakspeare, with a Specimen. [By Dr. Samuel Johnson.] 12mo. 1745.

A Word or two of Advice to William Warburton, a Dealer in many words. By a Friend. [Dr. Grey.] With an Appendix containing a taste of William's spirit of railing. 8vo. 1746.

Critical Observations on Shakspeare: by John Upton, Prebendary of Rochester. 8vo. First Edition, 1746. Second Edition, 1748.

Essay on English Tragedy, with Remarks on the Abbé Le Blanc's Observations on the English Stage. By William Guthrie, Esq. 8vo. no date, but printed in 1747.

An Enquiry into the Learning of Shakspeare, with Remarks on several Passages of his Plays. In a Conversation between Eugenius and Neander. By Peter Whalley, A. B. Fellow of St. John's College Oxford. 8vo. 1748.

An Answer to certain Passages in Mr. W——'s Preface to his Edition of Shakspeare, together with some Remarks on the many Errors and false Criticisms in the Work itself. 8vo. 1748.

Remarks upon a late Edition of Shakspeare: with a long string of Emendations borrowed by the celebrated Editor

CRITICISMS ON SHAKSPEARE, &c. 245

Editor from the Oxford Edition without acknowledgment. To which is prefixed a Defence of the late Sir Thomas Hanmer, Bart. Addressed to the Rev. Mr. Warburton, Preacher of Lincoln's Inn, &c. 8vo. No date.

The Canons of Criticism and Glossary, being a Supplement to Mr. Warburton's Edition of Shakspeare. Collected from the Notes in that celebrated Work, and proper to be bound up with it. By the other Gentleman of Lincoln's Inn. [Mr. Edwards.] First Edition, 8vo. 1748. Seventh Edition, with Additions. 8vo. 1765.

Remarks on Shakspeare by Mr. Roderick, are printed at the end of this Edition.

An Attempte to rescue that aunciente English Poet and Play-wrighte Maister Williaeme Shakspeare from the many errorrs faulselfy charged on him by certaine new-fangled Wittes; and to let him speak for himself, as right well he wotteth, when freedde from the many careless mistakings of the heedless first Imprinters of his Workes. By a Gentleman formerly of Gray's Inn. [Mr. Holt.] 8vo, 1749.

Miscellaneous Observations on the Tragedy of Hamlet Prince of Denmark: with a Preface containing some general Remarks on the Writings of Shakspeare. 8vo. 1752.

The Beauties of Shakspeare: regularly selected from each Play: with a general Index digesting them under proper Heads. Illustrated with explanatory Notes, and similar Passages from ancient and modern Authors. By William Dodd, B. A. late of Clare Hall, Cambridge. 2 Vols. 12mo. First Edition, 1752. Second Edition, 1757. Third Edition in 3 Vols.

Shakspeare illustrated: or the Novels and Histories on which the Plays of Shakspeare are founded, collected and translated from the original Authors, with critical Remarks. In two Volumes. [By Mrs. Lenox.] 12mo. 1753.

A third Volume with the same Title, 1754.

[Q 3]

The

246 CRITICISMS ON SHAKSPEARE, &c.

The Novel from which the Play of the Merchant of Venice written by Shakspeare, is taken, translated from the Italian. To which is added, a Translation of a Novel from the Decamerone of Boccaccio. 8vo. 1755.

Critical, Historical, and Explanatory Notes on Shakspeare, with Emendations of the Text and Metre: by Zachary Grey, LL. D. 2 Vols. 8vo. 1755.

The Castrated Letter of Sir Thomas Hanmer, in the Sixth Volume of BIOGRAPHIA BRITANNICA, wherein is discovered the first rise of the present Bishop of Gloucester's quarrel with that Baronet, about his edition of Shakspeare's plays: to which is added an impartial account of the extraordinary means used to suppress this remarkable letter. By a Proprietor of that work. [Philip Nichols.] 4to. 1763.

A Revival of Shakspeare's Text, wherein the Alterations introduced into it by the more Modern Editors and Criticks are particularly considered. [By Mr. Heath.] 8vo. 1765.

A Review of Dr. Johnson's New Edition of Shakspeare; in which the Ignorance or Inattention of that Editor is exposed, and the Poët defended from the Persecution of his Commentators. By W. Kenrick. 8vo. 1765.

An Examination of Mr. Kenrick's Review of Mr. Johnson's Edition of Shakspeare. [By Mr. Barclay.] 8vo. 1766.

A Defence of Mr. Kenrick's Review of Dr. Johnson's Shakspeare, containing a number of curious and ludicrous Anecdotes of Literary Biography. By a Friend. [i. e. W. Kenrick.] 8vo. 1766.

Observations and Conjectures on some Passages of Shakspeare. [By Tho. Tyrwhitt, Esq.] 8vo. 1766.

An Essay on the Learning of Shakspeare, addressed to Joseph Cradock, Esq. By the Rev. Dr. Richard Farmer. 8vo. 1767. Second Edition, crown 8vo. 1767.

A Letter

CRITICISMS ON SHAKSPEARE, &c. 247

A Letter to David Garrick, Esq. concerning a Glossary to the Plays of Shakspeare, on a more extensive Plan than has hitherto appeared. To which is added a Specimen. By Richard Warner, Esq. 8vo. 1768.

An Essay on the Writings and Genius of Shakspeare, compared with the Greek and French Dramatick Poets, with some Remarks upon the Misrepresentations of Monsieur de Voltaire. By Mrs. Montagu. 8vo. First Edition, 1769. Second Edition, 1776.

The Tragedy of King Lear as lately published, vindicated from the Abuse of the Critical Reviewers; and the wonderful Genius and Abilities of those Gentlemen for Criticism, set forth, celebrated, and extolled. By the Editor of King Lear. [Charles Jennens, Esq.] 8vo. 1772.

Shakspeare. 4to. This piece was written by Dr. Kenrick Prescott, and is dated Feb. 5, 1774.

Curfory Remarks on Tragedy, on Shakspeare, and on certain French and Italian Poets, &c. Crown 8vo. 1774.

A Philosophical Analysis and Illustration of some of Shakspeare's remarkable Characters. By William Richardson, Esq. Professor of Humanity in the University of Glasgow. 12mo. First Edition, 1773. Second Edition, 1774.

The Morality of Shakspeare's Drama illustrated. By Mrs. Griffith. 8vo. 1775.

A Letter to George Hardinge, Esq. on the Subject of a Passage in Mr. Steevens's Preface to his Impression of Shakspeare. [By the Rev. Mr. Collins.] 4to. 1777. [Dr. Johnson observed of this performance, that it was "a great gun without powder and ball."] On the title-page of a copy of it presented by Mr. Capell, together with his *Shakspeariana*, to Trinity College, Cambridge, is the following Ms. note: "Seen through the press by Mr. H——, &c. Note in p. 18 added, and the postscript new-molded by him. E. C." i. e. Edward Capell.

248 CRITICISMS ON SHAKSPEARE, &c.

Discours sur Shakspeare et sur Monsieur de Voltaire, par Joseph Baretti, Secrétaire pour la Correspondence étrangere de l'Academie Royale Britannique. 8vo. 1777.

An Essay on the Dramatick Character of Sir John Falstaff. [By Mr. Morgan.] 8vo. 1777.

A Letter from Monsieur de Voltaire to the French Academy. Translated from the original Edition just published at Paris. 8vo. 1777.

A Supplement to the edition of Shakspeare's plays published in 1778.—Containing Additional Observations by several of the former Commentators; to which are subjoined the Genuine Poems of the same authour, and Seven Plays that have been ascribed to him; with Notes, by the editor [Mr. Malone] and others. 2 Vols. 8vo. 1780.

Notes and Various Readings to Shakspeare, by Edward Capell. 3 vols. 4to. 1781.

Remarks critical and illustrative on the text and notes of the last edition of Shakspeare. [i. e. Mr. Steevens's edition in 1778.] 8vo. 1783.

A familiar address to the curious in English poetry, more particularly to the readers of Shakspeare. By Therfites Literarius. 8vo. 1784.

A Second Appendix to Mr. Malone's Supplement to the last edition of the plays of Shakspeare; containing additional observations by the editor of the Supplement. 8vo. 1783.—Of this appendix only fifty Copies were printed.

Essays on Shakspeare's dramatick characters of Richard the Third, King Lear, and Timon of Athens. To which are added, an Essay on the faults of Shakspeare, and additional observations on the character of Hamlet. By Mr. Richardson. 12mo. 1784.

Dramatick

CRITICISMS ON SHAKSPEARE, &c. 249

Dramatick Miscellanies, consisting of Critical Observations on the plays of Shakspeare, &c. By Thomas Davies. 3 vols. crown 8vo. 1784.

Comments on the last edition of Shakspeare's plays. By John Monck Mason, Esq. 8vo. 1785.


Remarks on some of the characters of Shakspeare. By the author of *Observations on Modern Gardening*. 8vo. 1785.

Macbeth Reconsidered, an Essay; intended as an answer to part of the Remarks on some of the characters of Shakspeare. 8vo. 1786.

A Concordance to Shakspeare; suited to all the editions, &c. 8vo. 1787.

This book is not what it professes to be, being only a number of passages in Shakspeare's plays, ill selected, and absurdly arranged.

The Quip Modest; a few words by way of supplement to Remarks, Critical and Illustrative, on the text and notes of the last edition of Shakspeare, &c. 8vo. 1788.

 The authour of this pamphlet, after a few copies had got abroad, had the *modesty* to suppress it. Some time afterwards, repenting as it were of his repentance, he issued it out. One instance may be sufficient to shew his profound ignorance of the poet whom he attempted to illustrate; he supposed the words *ignomy* and *intergatory*, in a late edition of Shakspeare, to be errors of the press! So, when the clown in *Measure for Measure* says, "there were but two stew'd prunes in the house, which at that very *distant* time stood, as it were in a fruit-dish," &c. this Remarker, for *distant*, would read *instant*.

A list of such errors may be easily enlarged. When Dame Quickly talks of a *honey-suckle* villain, and Mercutio speaks of the nurse's *inditing* Romeo to supper, according to the crude notions of this QUIPSTER, we ought for *honey-suckle* to substitute *homicidal*, for *indite*, *invite*, &c. &c.

EXTRACTS OF ENTRIES

ON THE

BOOKS of the STATIONERS' COMPANY.

A Charter was granted to the Company of Stationers on the 4th of May, 1556, (third and fourth of Philip and Mary,) and was confirmed by Queen Elizabeth in 1560.

The first volume of these Entries has been either lost or destroyed, as the earliest now to be found is lettered B¹. The hall was burnt in the fire of London. The entries begin July 17, 1576.

Feb. 18, 1582.

M. Tottell.] *Romeo and Juliet*².

Vol. B.

p. 193

April 3, 1592.

Edw. White.] *The tragedie of Arden of Feversham and Black Will*³.

286

N. B. The terms *book* and *ballad* were anciently used to signify dramattick works as well as any other forms of composition; while *tragedy* and *comedy* were titles very often bestowed on novels of the serious and the lighter kind. STEEVENS.

¹ Since this was written, the first volume, marked A, has been found. MALONE.

² Perhaps the original work on which Shakspeare founded his play of *Romeo and Juliet*. STEEVENS.

³ This play was reprinted in 1770 at Feversham, with a preface attributing it to Shakspeare. The collection of parallel passages which the editor has brought forward to justify his supposition, is such as will make the reader smile. The following is a specimen:

Arden of Feversham, p. 74.

"Fling down Endimion, and snatch him up."

Mercant of Venice, Act V. sc. i.

"Peace! how the moon sleeps with Endymion!"

Arden of Feversham, p. 87.

"Let my death make amends for all my sin."

Macb Ado about Notbing, Act IV. sc. ii.

"Death is the fairest cover for her shame." STEEVENS.

April

April 18, 1593.

Rich. Field.] A booke entitled *Venus and Adonis*⁴. 297 b.

Afterwards entered by — Harrison,
sen. June 23, 1594: by W. Leake, June
23, 1596: by W. Barrett, Feb. 16,
1616, and by John Parker, March 8,
1619.

Oct. 19, 1593.

Symon Waterfon.] A booke entitled the Trage-
die of *Cleopatra*⁵. 301 b.

Feb. 6, 1593

John Danter.] A booke entitled a noble Roman
History of *Titus Andronicus*. 304 b.

Entered also unto him by warrant
from Mr. Woodcock, the ballad thereof.

March 12. 1593.

Tho. Millington.] A booke entituled the First
Part of the Contention of the twoo fa-
mous Houses of Yorke and Lancaster,
with the Deathe of the good Duke Hum-
phrie, and the Banishment and Deathe
of the Duke of Yorke, and the tragical
Ende of the proude Cardinall of Win-
chester, with the notable Rebellion of
Jacke Cade, and the Duke of Yorke's
first Claime unto the Crown. 305 b.

⁴ The last stanza of a poem entitled "*Mirrha the Mother of Adonis; or Lustes Prodegies*, by William Barksfed," 1607, has the following praise of Shakspeare's *Venus and Adonis*.

"But stay, my muse, in thy own confines keepe,
"And wage not warre with so deere-lov'd a neighbor;
"But, having sung thy day-song, rest and sleepe,
"Preserve thy small fame and his greater favor.
"His song was worthie merit, (Shakspeare hee)
"Sung the faire blossome, thou the withered tree:
"Laurel is due to him; his art and wit

"Hath purchas'd it; cypres thy brow will fit." STEEVENS.

⁵ I suppose this to be Daniel's tragedy of *Cleopatra*. Simon Water-
fon was one of the printers of his other works. STEEVENS.

Daniel's *Cleopatra* was published by Waterfon in 1594; this entry
therefore undoubtedly related to it. MALONE.

May

May 2, 1594.

Peter Shorte.] A pleasaunt conceyted hystorie
called the Tayminge of a Shrowe⁶. 306 b.

May 9, 1594.

Mr. Harrison Sen.] A booke entituled the Ravysh-
ment of Lucrece. 306 b.

May 12, 1594.

Tho. Strode.] A booke entituled the famous Vic-
tories of Henry the Fift, containing the
honorable Battell of Agincourt⁷. 306 b.

May 14, 1594.

Edw. White.] A booke entituled the famous
Chronicle Historie of Leire King of
England and his three Daughters⁸. 307

May 22, 1594.

Edw. White.] A booke intituled a Winter Nyghts
Pastime⁹. 307 b.

June 19, 1594.

Tho. Creede.] An enterlude entituled the Tragedie
of Richard the Third, wherein is shown
the Death of Edward the Fourthe, with
the Smotheringe of the twoo Princes in
the Tower, with the lamentable End of
Shore's Wife, and the Contention of the
two Houses of Lancaster and York¹. 309 b.

⁶ I conceive it to be the play that furnished Shakspeare with the materials which he afterwards worked up into another with the same titie. STEEVENS.

⁷ This might have been the *very displeasing play* mentioned in the epilogue to the second part of King Henry IV. STEEVENS.

The earliest edition of this play now known to be extant, was printed in 1598. Of that edition I have a copy. This piece furnished Shakspeare with the outline of the two parts of *K. Henry IV.* as well as with that of *K. Henry V.* MALONE.

⁸ I suppose this to be the play on the same subject as that of our author, but written before it. STEEVENS.

⁹ Query, if the *Winter's Tale*. STEEVENS.

¹ This could not have been the work of Shakspeare, as the death of Jane Shore makes no part of his drama. STEEVENS.

July

July 20, 1594.

Tho. Creede.] The lamentable Tragedie of Locrine, the eldest Son of K. Brutus, discourfing the Warres of the Britains, &c. 310 b.
Vol. C.

Before the beginning of this volume are placed two leaves containing irregular entries, prohibitions, notes, &c. Among these are the following.

Aug. 4th.

As You like it, a book.	} to be staied.
Henry the Fift, a book ² .	
Comedy of Much Ado about Nothing.	

The dates scattered over these pages are from 1596 to 1615.

Dec. 1, 1595.

Cuthbert Burby.] A booke entituled Edward the Third and the Black Prince, their warres with King John of France³. 6

Aug. 5, 1596.

Edw. White.] A new ballad of Romeo and Juliet⁴. 12 b.

Aug. 15, 1597.

Rich. Jones.] Two ballads, being the first and second parts of the Widowe of Watlingstreet⁵. 22 b.

² Probably the play before that of Shakspeare. STEEVENS.

Surely this must have been Shakspeare's *Henry V.* which, as well as *Much ado about nothing*, was printed in 1600, when this entry appears to have been made. See the Essay on the chronological order of Shakspeare's plays; Article, *As you like it*. MALONE.

³ This is ascribed to Shakspeare by the compilers of ancient catalogues. STEEVENS.

⁴ Quere, if Shakspeare's play, the first edition of which appeared in 1597. STEEVENS.

⁵ Perhaps the songs on which the play with the same title was founded. It may, however, be the play itself. It was not uncommon to divide one dramattick piece, though designed for a single exhibition, into two parts. See the *K. John* before that of Shakspeare.

Aug. 29, 1597.

Andrew Wife.] The tragedye of Richard the
Seconde. 23

Oct. 20, 1597.

Andrew Wife.] The tragedie of King Richard
the Third, with the Deathe of the Duke
of Clarence. 25

Feb. 25, 1597.

Andrew Wife.] A booke entitled the Historie of
Henry the Fourth, with his Battle at
Shrewsbury against Henry Hottspurre of
the North, with the conceived Mirth
of Sir John Falstoff. 31

July 22, 1598.

James Roberts.] A booke of the Merchaunt of Ve-
nyse, otherwise called the Jewe of Ve-
nyse. Provided that it be not prynted
by the said James Roberts or any other
whatsoever, without leave first had from
the ryght honourable the Lord Cham-
berlen. 39 b.

Jan. 9, 1598.

Mr. Woolff.] A booke called the Firste Parte of
the Life and Reign of King Henry the
Fourth, extending to the End of the
first Yeare of his Reign*. 45 b.

Aug. 4, 1600.

Tho. Pavyer.] First Part of the History of the
Life of Sir John Oldcastle Lord Cob-
ham.

Item, The Second Part of the History
of Sir John Oldcastle Lord Cobham,
with his Martyrdom. 63

Aug. 14, 1600.

Tho. Pavyer.] The Historye of Henry the Fifth,
with the Battel of Agincourt, &c. 63

* This was a narrative in prose, written by I. Hayward. MALONE.

STATIONERS' REGISTERS. 255

Aug. 23, 1600.

And. Wife, and Wm. Aspley.] Much Ado about Nothing. 63 b.

Second Part of the History of King Henry the Fourth, with the Humours of Sir John Falstaff, written by Mr. SHAKESPERE. ibid.

Oct. 8, 1600.

Tho. Fisher.] A booke called a Midfomer Nyghte Dreame. 65 b.

Oct. 23, 1600.

Tho. Heyes.] A booke called the Book of the Merchaunt of Venyce. 66

Jan. 18, 1601.

John Busby.] An excellent and pleasaunt conceited comedie of Sir John Faulstoff and the Merry Wyves of Windfore. 78

Arth. Johnson.] The preceding entered as assigned to him from John Busby. ibid.

April 19, 1602.

Tho. Pavyer.] A booke called Titus Andronicus. 80 b.

July 26, 1602.

James Roberts.] A booke called the Revenge of Hamlett Prince of Denmarke, as it was lately acted by the Lord Chamberlain his servants. 84 b.

Aug. 11, 1602.

Wm. Cotton.] A booke called the Lyfe and Death of the Lord Cromwell, as yt was lately acted by the Lord Chamberleyne his servants. 85 b.

Feb. 7, 1602.

Mr. Roberts.] The booke of Troilus and Cressida, as it is acted by my Lo. Chamberlen's men. 91 b.
June

June 25, 1603.

Matt. Law.]	Richard 3.	} all kings.	98
	Richard 2.		
	Henry 4. 1st. Part.		

Feb. 12, 1604.

Nath. Butter.] That he get good allowance for the Enterlude of Henry 8, before he begin to print it; and then procure the warden's hand to it for the entrance of yt, he is to have the same for his copy⁶. 120

May 8, 1605.

Simon Stafford.] A booke called the tragicall Historie of King Leir and his three Daughters, as it was lately acted. 123

John Wright.] By assignment from Simon Stafford and consent of Mr. Leake, the tragical History of King Lear, &c. provided that Simon Stafford shall have the printing of this book⁷. *ibid.*

July 3, 1605.

Tho. Pavyer.] A ballad of a lamentable Murder done in Yorkshire, by a Gent. upon two of his owne Children, fore wounding his Wife and Nurse⁸, &c. 126

Jan. 22, 1606.

Nich. Ling.] Romeo and Juliett.
Love's Labour Lost.
Taming of a Shrewe. 147

Aug. 6, 1607.

Geo. Elde.] A booke called the Comedie of the Puritan Wydowe. 157 b.

⁶ This was a play entitled, *When you see me you know me, or the famous chronicle historie of King Henrie the Eight, &c.* by Samuel Rowley. Printed for N. Butter, 1605. MALONE.

⁷ This is the *King Lear* before that of Shakspeare. STEEVENS.

⁸ Query, if the play. STEEVENS.

STATIONERS' REGISTERS. 257

Aug. 6, 1607.

'Tho. Thorpe.] A comedy called What you Will⁹. *ibid.*

Oct. 22, 1607.

Arth. Johnson.] The Merry Devil of Edmonton¹. 159 b.

Nov. 19, 1607.

John Smythwick.] A booke called Hamlett.

The Taminge of a Shrewe.

Romeo and Juliett.

Love's Labour Lost. 161

Nov. 26, 1607.

Nath. Butter and John Busby.] Mr. William Shakespeare, his Hyſtorie of King Lear, as it was played before the King's Majestie at Whitehall, upon St. Stephen's night at Christmas last, by his Majesties servants playing usually at the Globe on the Bank-side. 161 b.

April 5, 1608.

Joseph Hunt and Tho. Archer.] A book called the Life and Death of the Merry Devil of Edmonton, with the pleasant Pranks of Smugg the Smith, Sir John, and mine Hoste of the George, about their stealing of Venison. By T. B². 165 b.

⁹ Perhaps this is Marston's comedy of *What you Will*. I have a copy of it dated 1607. *What you Will*, however, is the second title to Shakspeare's *Twelfth Night*. STEEVENS.

This was certainly Marston's play, for it was printed in 1607, by G. Eld, for T. Thorpe. MALONE.

¹ The *Merry Devil of Edmonton* is mentioned in the *Blacke Booke* by T. M. 1604. "Give him leave to see the *Merry Diuel of Edmunton*, or *A Woman kill'd with Kindnesse*." STEEVENS.

² Bound up in a volume of plays attributed to Shakspeare, and once belonging to King Charles I. but now in Mr. Garrick's collection. The initial letters at the end of this entry, sufficiently free Shakspeare from the charge of having been its author. STEEVENS.

May 2, 1608.

Mr. Pavyer.] A booke called a Yorkshire Tragedy, written by Wylliam Shakespeare. 167

May 2, 1608.

Edw. Blount.] The book of Pericles Prince of Tyre. 167 b.
A book called Anthony and Cleopatra. ibid.

Jan. 28, 1608.

Rich. Bonian and Hen. Whalley.] A booke called the History of Troylus and Cressida. 178 b.

May 20, 1609.

Tho. Thorpe.] A booke called Shakespeare's Sonnets. 183 b.

Oct 16, 1609.

Mr. Welby.] Edward the Third. 189

Dec. 16, 1611.

John Browne.] A booke called the Lyfe and Death of the Lo. Cromwell, by W.S. 214 b.

Nov. 29, 1614.

John Beale.] A booke called the Hyftorie of Lord Faulconbridge, bastard Son to Richard Cordelion³. 256 b.

Feb. 16, 1616.

Mr. Barrett.] Life and Death of Lord Cromwell. 279

March 20, 1617.

Mr. Snodham.] Edward the Third, the play. 288

³ Query, if this was Shakspeare's *K. John*, or some old romance like that of *Richard Coeur de Lion*. STEEVENS.

It was undoubtedly *The famous Historie of George Lord Fauconbridge*, a prose romance. I have an edition of it now before me printed for I. B. dated 1616. MALONE.

STATIONERS' REGISTERS. 259

Sept. 17, 1618.

John Wright.] The comedy called Mucedorus⁴: 293 b.

July 8, 1619.

Nich. Okes.] A play called the Merchaunt of Venice.

303.
Vol. D.

Oct. 6, 1621.

Tho. Walkely.] The tragedie of Othello the Moore of Venice. 21

Nov. 8, 1623.

Mr. Blount and Ifaak Jaggard.] Mr. William Shakespeare's Comedyes and Tragedyes, foe many of the said Copies as are not formerly entered to other men.

Viz.

- | | | | |
|------------|---|-----------------------------------|----|
| | { | The Tempest. | |
| | { | Two Gentlemen of Verona. | |
| | { | Measure for Measure. | |
| Comedyes. | { | The Comedy of Errors. | |
| | { | As You Like it. | |
| | { | Alls Well that Ends Well. | |
| | { | Twelwe Night. | |
| | { | The Winter's Tale. | |
| Histories. | { | The Third Part of Henry the Sixt. | |
| | { | Henry the Eight. | |
| | { | Coriolanus. | |
| | { | Timon of Athens. | |
| Tragedies. | { | Julius Cæsar. | |
| | { | Macbeth. | |
| | { | Anthonie and Cleopatra. | |
| | { | Cymbeline. | 69 |

Dec. 14, 1624.

Mr. Pavyer.] Titus Andronicus. 93
Widow of Watling Street.

⁴ Bound up in a volume of plays attributed to Shakspeare, and once belonging to King Charles the First. See Mr. Garrick's Collection.

STEEVENS.

- Feb. 23, 1625.
Mr. Stansby.] Edward the Third, the play. 115
- April 3, 1626.
Mr. Parker.] Life and Death of Lord Cromwell. 120
- Aug. 4, 1626.
Edw. Brewster.] Mr. Pavyer's right in Shake-
Rob. Birde.] speare's plays, or any of them.
Sir John Oldcastle, a play.
Titus Andronicus.
Hystorie of Hamblett. 127
- Jan. 29, 1629.
Mr. Meighen.] Merry Wives of Windfor. 193
- Nov. 8, 1630.
Ric. Cotes.] Henrye the Fift.
Sir John Oldcastle.
Tytus Andronicus.
Yorke and Lancaster.
Agincourt.
Pericles.
Hamblett.
Yorkshire Tragedy. 208
- The sixteen plays in p. 69, were assigned by Tho.
Blount to Edward Allot, June 26, 1632. 109
Edward Allott was one of the publishers of the
second Folio, 1632. STEEVENS.

A N
A T T E M P T
TO ASCERTAIN THE
O R D E R
IN WHICH
THE PLAYS OF SHAKSPEARE
WERE WRITTEN¹.

—— *Primusque per avia campi
Usque procul, (necdum totas lux moverat umbras,)
Nescio quid visu dubium, incertumque moveri,
Corporaque ire videt.*

STATIUS.

Trattando l'ombre come cosa calda.

DANTE.

EVERY circumstance that relates to those persons whose writings we admire, awakens and interests our curiosity. The time and place of their birth, their education and gradual attainments, the dates of their productions and the reception they severally met with, their habits of life, their private friendships, and even their external form, are all points, which, how little soever they may have been adverted to by their contemporaries, strongly engage the attention of posterity. Not satisfied with receiving the aggregated wisdom of ages as a free gift, we visit the mansions where our instructors are said to have resided, we contemplate with pleasure the trees under whose shade they once reposed, and wish to see and to converse with those sages, whose labours have added strength to virtue, and efficacy to truth.

¹ The first edition of this Essay was published in January 1778.

Shakspeare above all writers, since the days of Homer, has excited this curiosity in the highest degree; as perhaps no poet of any nation was ever more idolized by his countrymen. An ardent desire to understand and explain his works, is, to the honour of the present age, so much increased within the last forty years, that more has been done towards their elucidation, during that period², than in a century before. All the ancient copies of his plays, hitherto discovered, have been collated with the most scrupulous accuracy.¹ The meanest books have been carefully examined, only because they were of the age in which he lived, and might happily throw a light on some forgotten custom, or obsolete phraseology: and, this object being still kept in view, the toil of wading through *all such reading as was never read* has been cheerfully endured, because no labour was thought too great, that might enable us to add one new laurel to the father of our drama. Almost every circumstance that tradition or history has preserved relative to him or his works, has been investigated, and laid before the publick; and the avidity with which all communications of this kind have been received, sufficiently proves that the time expended in the pursuit has not been wholly misemployed.

However, after the most diligent inquiries, very few particulars have been recovered, respecting his private life or literary history: and while it has been the endeavour of all his editors and commentators to illustrate his obscurities, and to regulate and correct his text, no attempt has been made to trace the progress and order of his plays. Yet surely it is no incurious speculation, to mark the gradations³ by which he rose from mediocrity

² Within the period here mentioned, the commentaries of Warburton, Edwards, Heath, Johnson, Tyrwhitt, Farmer, and Steevens, have been published.

³ It is not pretended that a regular scale of gradual improvement is here presented to the publick; or that, if even Shakspeare himself had left us a chronological list of his dramas, it would exhibit such a scale. All that is meant, is, that, as his knowledge increased, and as he became

rity to the summit of excellence; from artless and sometimes uninteresting dialogues, to those unparalleled compositions,

became more conversant with the stage and with life, his performances in general were written more happily and with greater art; or (to use the words of Dr. Johnson) "that however favoured by nature, he could only impart what he had learned, and as he must increase his ideas, like other mortals, by gradual acquisition, he, like them, grew wiser as he grew older, could display life better as he knew it more, and instruct with more efficacy, as he was himself more amply instructed." Of this opinion also was Mr. Pope. "It must be observed, (says he) that when his performances had merited the protection of his prince, and when the encouragement of the court had succeeded to that of the town, the works of his riper years are manifestly raised above those of his former.—And I make no doubt that this observation would be found true in every instance, were but editions extant from which we might learn the exact time when every piece was composed, and whether writ for the town or the court."—From the following lines it appears, that Dryden also thought that our authour's most imperfect plays were his earliest dramatick compositions:

"Your Ben and Fletcher in their first young flight,
 "Did no *Volpone*, no *Arbaces* write;
 "But hopp'd about, and short excursions made
 "From bough to bough, as if they were afraid;
 "And each were guilty of some *Slighted Maid*.
 "Shakspeare's own muse his *Pericles* first bore;
 "*The Prince of Tyre* was elder than the *Moor*;
 "'Tis miracle to see a first good play;
 "All hawthorns do not bloom on Christmas-day.
 "A slender poet must have time to grow,
 "And spread and burnish, as his brothers do:
 "Who still looks lean, sure with some p— is curst,
 "But no man can be *Falstaff* fat at first."

Prologue to the tragedy of *Circe*.

The plays which Shakspeare produced before the year 1600, are known, and are seventeen or eighteen in number. The rest of his dramas, we may conclude, were composed between that year and the time of his retiring to the country. It is incumbent on those, who differ in opinion from the great authorities abovementioned,—who think with Rowe, that "*we are not to look for his beginnings in his least perfect works*," it is incumbent, I say, on those persons, to enumerate in the former class, that is, among the plays produced before 1600, compositions of equal merit with *Othello*, *King Lear*, *Macbeth*, *the Tempest*, and *Twelfth Night*, which we have reason to believe were all written in the latter period; and among his late performances,

[R 4]

that

compositions, which have rendered him the delight and wonder of successive ages.

The materials for ascertaining the order in which his plays were written, are indeed so few, that, it is to be feared, nothing very decisive can be produced on this subject. In the following attempt to trace the progress of his dramatick art, probability alone is pretended to. The silence and inaccuracy of those persons, who, after his death, had the revivall of his papers, will perhaps for ever prevent our attaining to any thing like proof on this head. Little then remains, but to collect into one view, from his several dramas, and from the ancient tracts in which they are mentioned, or alluded to, all the circumstances that can throw any light on this new and curious inquiry. From those circumstances, and from the entries in the books of the Stationers' company, extracted and published by Mr. Steevens, (to whom every admirer of Shakspeare has the highest obligations,) it is probable that our authour's plays were written nearly in the following succession; which, though it cannot at this day be ascertained to be their true order, may yet be considered as approaching nearer to it, than any which has been observed in the various editions of his works.

Of the twenty-one plays which were not printed in our authour's life-time⁴, the majority were, I believe, late

that is, among the plays which are supposed to have appeared after the year 1600, to point out pieces, as hasty and indigested, as *Love's Labour's Lost*, *the Comedy of Errors*, and *the Two Gentlemen of Verona*, which, we know, were among his earlier works.

⁴ They are, *King Henry VI. P. I.* The Second and Third Parts of *K. Henry VI.* (as he wrote them) *The Comedy of Errors*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *King John*, *All's Well that Ends Well*, *As you like it*, *King Henry VIII.* *Measure for Measure*, *The Winter's Tale*, *Cymbeline*, *Macbeth*, *Julius Cæsar*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Timon of Athens*, *Coriolanus*, *Othello*, *The Tempest*; and *Twelfth Night*. These were not printed in quarto, but appeared first in the folio edition published by Heminge and Condell, in 1623. Of these plays, seven, viz. *The first part of K. Henry VI.* (allowing that play to be Shakspeare's,) *The Second and Third Parts of K. Henry VI.* King

late compositions⁵. The following arrangement is in some measure formed on this notion. Two reasons may be assigned, why Shakspeare's late performances were not published till after his death. 1. If we suppose him to have written for the stage during a period of twenty years, those pieces which were produced in the latter part of that period, were less likely to pass through the press in his life-time, as the curiosity of the publick had not been so long engaged by them, as by his early compositions. 2. From the time that Shakspeare had the superintendence of a playhouse, that is, from the year 1603⁶, when he and several others obtained a licence from King James to exhibit comedies, tragedies, histo-

King John, *The Comedy of Errors*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, and *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, were certainly early compositions, and are an exception to the general truth of this observation. One other, viz. *All's well that ends well*, though supposed to have been an early production, was, it must be acknowledged, not published in Shakspeare's life-time; but for the date of this play we rely only on conjecture.

⁵ This supposition is strongly confirmed by Meres's list of our authour's plays, in 1598. From that list, and from other circumstances, we learn, that of the fourteen plays which were printed in Shakspeare's life-time, thirteen were written before the end of the year 1600.—The fourteen plays published in our authour's life-time, are—*A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, *Love's Labour's Lost*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hamlet*, *K. Richard II.* *K. Richard III.* *The First Part of K. Henry IV.* *The Second Part of K. Henry IV.* *The Merchant of Venice*, *K. Henry V.* *Much Ado about Nothing*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Troilus and Cressida*, and *K. Lear*.

⁶ None of the plays which in the ensuing list are supposed to have been written subsequently to this year, were printed till after the authour's death, except *K. Lear*, the publication of which was probably hastened by that of the old play with the same title, in 1605.—The copy of *Troilus and Cressida*, which seems to have been composed the year before K. James granted a licence to the company at the Globe Theatre, appears to have been obtained by some uncommon artifice. "Thank fortune (says the editor) for the *scape* it hath made amongst you; since, by the grand possessors' wills, I believe, you should have pray'd for them [*r. it*] rather than been pray'd."—By the grand possessors, Shakspeare and the other managers of the Globe Theatre, were certainly intended.

ries,

ries, &c. at the Globe Theatre, and elsewhere, it became strongly his interest to preserve those pieces unpublished, which were composed between that year and the time of his retiring to the country; manuscript plays being then the great support of every theatre. Nor were the plays which he wrote after he became a manager, so likely to get abroad, being confined to his own theatre, as his former productions, which perhaps had been acted on different stages, and of consequence afforded the players at the several houses where they were exhibited, an easy opportunity of making out copies from the separate parts transcribed for their use, and of selling such copies to printers; by which means there is reason to believe that some of them were submitted to the press, without the consent of the authour.

The following is the order in which I suppose the plays of Shakspeare to have been written :

1. FIRST PART OF KING HENRY VI.	1589.
2. SECOND PART OF KING HENRY VI.	1591.
3. THIRD PART OF KING HENRY VI.	1591.
4. A MIDSUMMER-NIGHT'S DREAM,	1592.
5. COMEDY OF ERRORS, — —	1593.
6. TAMING OF THE SHREW, — —	1594.
7. LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST, — —	1594.
8. TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA, —	1595.
9. ROMEO AND JULIET, — —	1595.
10. HAMLET, — — —	1596.
11. KING JOHN, — — —	1596.
12. KING RICHARD II. — —	1597.
13. KING RICHARD III. — —	1597.
14. FIRST PART OF KING HENRY IV.	1597.
15. SECOND PART OF KING HENRY IV.	1598.
16. THE MERCHANT OF VENICE, —	1598.
17. ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL,	1598.
18. KING HENRY V. — —	1599.
19. MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING, —	1600.
20. AS YOU LIKE IT, — —	1600.
21. MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR, —	1601.

OF SHAKSPEARE'S PLAYS.

267

22. KING HENRY VIII.	—	—	1601.
23. TROILUS AND CRESSIDA,	—	—	1602.
24. MEASURE FOR MEASURE,	—	—	1603.
25. THE WINTER'S TALE,	—	—	1604.
26. KING LEAR,	—	—	1605.
27. CYMBELINE,	—	—	1605.
28. MACBETH,	—	—	1606.
29. JULIUS CÆSAR,	—	—	1607.
30. ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA,	—	—	1608.
31. TIMON OF ATHENS,	—	—	1609.
32. CORIOLANUS,	—	—	1610.
33. OTHELLO,	—	—	1611.
34. THE TEMPEST,	—	—	1612.
35. TWELFTH NIGHT,	—	—	1614.

1. THE FIRST PART OF KING HENRY VI. 1589.

In what year our authour began to write for the stage, or which was his first performance, has not been hitherto ascertained. And indeed we have so few lights to direct our inquiries, that any speculation on this subject may appear an idle expence of time. But the method which has been already marked out, requires that such facts should be mentioned, as may serve in any manner to elucidate these points.

Shakspeare was born on the 23d of April, 1564, and was probably married in, or before, September 1582, his eldest daughter, Susanna, having been baptized on the 26th of May, 1583. At what time he left Warwickshire, or was first employed in the playhouse, tradition does not inform us. However, as his son Hamnet and his daughter Judith were baptized at Stratford, Feb. 2, 1584-5, we may presume that he had not left the country at that time.

He could not have wanted an easy introduction to the theatre; for Thomas Green⁷, a celebrated comedian,

was

7 "There was not (says Heywood in his preface to *Greene's Tu quoque*, a comedy,) an actor of his nature in his time, of better ability in

was his townsman, perhaps his relation, and Michael Drayton was likewise born in Warwickshire; the latter was nearly of his own age, and both were in some degree of reputation soon after the year 1590. If I were to indulge a conjecture, I should name the year 1591, as the era when our authour commenced a writer for the stage; at which time he was somewhat more than twenty-seven years old. The reasons that induce me to fix on that period are these. In Webbe's *Discourse of English Poetry*, published in 1586, we meet with the names of most of the celebrated poets of that time; particularly those of George Whetstone⁸ and Anthony Munday⁹, who were

in the performance of what he undertook, more applauded by the audience, of greater grace at the court, or of more general love in the city." The birth-place of Thomas Greene is ascertained by the following lines, which he speaks in one of the old comedies, in the character of a clown:

"I prattled poesie in my nurse's arms,

"And, born where late our swan of Avon sung,

"In Avon's streams we both of us have lav'd,

"And both came out together."

Chetwood, in his *British Theatre*, quotes this passage from the comedy of the *Two Maids of Moreclack*; but no such passage is there to be found. He deserves but little credit; having certainly forged many of his dates; however, he probably met with these lines in some ancient play, though he forgot the name of the piece from which he transcribed them. Greene was a writer as well as an actor. There are some verses of his prefixed to a collection of Drayton's poems, published in the year 1613. He was perhaps a kinsman of Shakspeare's. In the register of the parish of Stratford, Thomas Greene, alias Shakspeare, is said to have been buried there, March 6, 1589. He might have been the actor's father.

⁸ The authour of *Promos and Cassandra*, a play which furnished Shakspeare with the fable of *Measure for Measure*.

⁹ This poet is mentioned by Meres, in his *Wit's Treasury*, 1598, as an eminent comick writer, and the *best plotter* of his time. He seems to have been introduced under the name of Don Antonio Baladino, in a comedy that has been attributed to Ben Jonson, called *The Case is Altered*, and from the following passages in that piece appears to have been city-poet; whose business it was to compose an annual panegyrick on the Lord Mayor, and to write verses for the pageants: an office which has been discontinued since the death of Elkanah Settle in 1722:

Onion.

were *dramatick* writers; but we find no trace of our author, or of any of his works. Three years afterwards, Puttenham printed his *Art of English Poesy*; and in that work also we look in vain for the name of Shakspeare¹. Sir John Harrington in his *Apologie for Poetry*, prefixed to the *Translation of Ariosto*, (which was entered in the Stationers' books Feb. 26, 1590-1, in which year, it was published,) takes occasion to speak of the theatre, and mentions some of the celebrated dramas of that time; but says not a word of Shakspeare, or of his plays. If any of his dramatick compositions had then appeared, is it imaginable, that Harrington should have mentioned the Cambridge *Pedantius*, and *The Play of the Cards*, which last, he tells us was a *London* [i. e. an English] comedy, and have passed by, unnoticed, the new prodigy of the dramatick world?

“ *Oni.* Shall I request your name?

“ *Ant.* My name is Antonio Balladino.

“ *Oni.* Balladino! You are not pageant-poet to the city of Milan, fir, are you?

“ *Ant.* I supply the place, fir, when a worse cannot be had, fir.—

“ Did you see the last pageant I set forth?”

Afterwards Antonio, speaking of the plays he had written, says,

“ Let me have good ground,—no matter for the pen; *the plot* shall carry it.

“ *Oni.* Indeed that's right; *you are in print, already, for THE BEST PLOTTER.*

“ *Ant.* Ay; I might as well have been put in for a dumb-show too.”

It is evident, that this poet is here intended to be ridiculed by Ben Jonson: but he might, notwithstanding, have been deservedly eminent. That malignity which endeavoured to tear a wreath from the brow of Shakspeare, would certainly not spare inferior writers.

¹ The thirty-first chapter of the first book of Puttenham's *Art of English Poesy* is thus entitled: “Who in any age have bene the most commended writers in our English Poesie, and the author's censure given upon them.”

After having enumerated several authours who were then celebrated for various kinds of composition, he gives this succinct account of those who had written for the stage: “*Of the latter sort I thinke thus;—that for tragedie, the Lord Buckburst and Maister Edward Ferrys, for such doings as I have sene of theirs, do deserve the best price; the Earl of Oxford and Maister Edwardes of her Majestie's Chappell, for comedie and enterlude.*”

In

In Spenser's *Tears of the Muses*, first printed in 1591, the following lines are found in Thalia's complaint on account of the decay of dramatick poetry:

“ And he the man, whom nature's self had made
 “ To mock her selfe, and truth to imitate,
 “ With kindly counter under mimick shade,
 “ Our pleasant *Willy*, ah, is dead of late;
 “ With whom all joy and jolly merriment
 “ Is also deaded, and in dolour drent.

“ Instead thereof scoffing scurrilitie
 “ And scornful follie with contempt is crept,
 “ Rolling in rymes of shameless ribaudrie,
 “ Without regard or due decorum kept:
 “ Each idle wit at will presumes to make,
 “ And doth the learneds task upon him take.

“ But that same gentle spirit, from whose pen
 “ Large streames of honnie and sweet nectar flow,
 “ Scorning the boldness of such base-born men,
 “ Which dare their follies forth so rashlie throwe,
 “ Doth rather choose to sit in idle cell,
 “ Than so him selfe to mockerie to sell.”

These lines were inserted by Mr. Rowe in his first edition of *The Life of Shakspeare*, and he then supposed that they related to our poet, and alluded to his having withdrawn himself for some time from the publick, and discontinued writing, from “ a disgust he had taken to the then ill taste of the town and the mean condition of the stage.” But as Mr. Rowe suppressed this passage in his second edition, it may be presumed that he found reason to change his opinion. Dryden, however, he informs us, always thought that these verses related to Shakspeare: and indeed I do not recollect any dramatick poet of that time, to whom the character which they delineate is applicable, except our authour. It is remarkable that the very same epithet, which Spenser has employed, “ But that same *gentle* spirit,” &c. is likewise used by the players

players in their preface, where they speak of Shakspeare:—"who as he was a happie imitator of nature, was a most *gentle* expresser of it." On the other hand some little difficulty arises from the line—"And doth the *learneds* task upon him take;" for our poet certainly had no title to that epithet. Spenser, however, might have used it in an appropriated sense, *learned in all the business of the stage*; and in this sense the epithet is more applicable to Shakspeare than to any poet that ever wrote.

It should, however, be remembered, that the name *Willy*, for some reason or other which it is now in vain to seek, appears to have been applied by the poets of Shakspeare's age to persons who were not christened *William*. Thus, (as Dr. Farmer observes to me,) in "An Eglogue made long since on the death of Sir *Philip* Sydney," which is preserved in Davison's *Poetical Rhapsody*, 1602, we find that celebrated writer lamented in almost every stanza by the name of *Willy*:

"*Willy* is dead,

"That wont to lead

"Our flocks and us, in mirth and shepheards' glee," &c.

"Of none but *Willie's* pipe they made account," &c.

Spenser's *Willy*, however, could not have been Sir Philip Sydney, for he was dead some years before *The Tears of the Muses* was published.

If these lines were intended to allude to our authour, then he must have written some comedies in or before the year 1591; and the date which I have assigned to *A Midsummer-Night's Dream* is erroneous. I cannot expect to influence the decision of my reader on a subject on which I have not been able to form a decided opinion myself; and therefore shall content myself with merely stating the difficulties on each side. Supposing Shakspeare to have written any piece in the year 1590, Sir John Harrington's silence concerning him in the following year appears inexplicable.

But

But whatever poet may have been in Spenser's contemplation, it is certain that Shakspeare had commenced a writer for the stage, and had even excited the jealousy of his contemporaries, before September 1592. This is now decisively proved by a passage extracted by Mr. Tyrwhitt from Robert Greene's *Groatworth of Witte bought with a Million of Repentance*, in which there is an evident allusion to our authour's name, as well as to a line in the *Second Part of King Henry VI.*

This tract was published at the dying request of Robert Greene, a very voluminous writer of that time. The conclusion of it, as Mr. Tyrwhitt has observed, is "an address to his brother poets to dissuade them from writing for the stage, on account of the ill treatment which they were used to receive from the players." It begins thus: *To those gentlemen his quondam acquaintance that spend their wits in making playes, R. G. wissheth a better exercise, and wisdom to prevent his extremities.* His first address is undoubtedly to Christopher Marlowe, the most popular and admired dramatick poet of that age, previous to the appearance of Shakspeare. "Wonder not," (says Greene) "for with thee will I first begin, thou famous gracer of tragedians, that Greene, (who hath said *with thee*, like the foole in his heart, there is no God,) should now give glory unto his greatness; for penetrating is his power, his hand is heavy upon me; &c. Why should thy excellent wit, his gift, be so blinded, that thou should give no glory to the giver?—The brother [f. *breather*] of this diabolical atheism is dead, and in his life had never the felicitie he aimed at: but as he beganne in craft, lived in feare, and ended in despair. And wilt thou, my friend, be his disciple?—Looke unto me, by him perswaded to that libertie, and thou shalt find it an infernal bondage."

Greene's next address appears to be made to Thomas Lodge. "With thee I joyne young Juvenall, that byting satirist, that lastly with mee together writ a comedie. Sweet boy, might I advise thee, be advised, and get not many enemies by bitter words: inveigh against
vaine

vaine men, for thou canst do it, no man better, no man so well: thou hast libertie to reprove all, and name none.—Stop shallow water still running, it will rage; tread on a worrne, and it will turn; then Blame not schollers, who are vexed with sharpe and bitter lines, if they reprove too much libertie of reproof.”

George Peele, as Mr. Tyrwhitt has remarked, is next addressed. “ And thou no lesse deserving than the other two, in some things rarer, in nothing inferiour, driven, as my selfe, to extreame shifts, a little have I to say to thee: and were it not an idolatrous oath, I would sweare by sweet *S. George*, thou art unworthy better hap, sith thou dependest on so meane a stay. Base-minded men all three of you, if by my misery you be not warned: for unto none of you, like me, sought those burs to cleave; those puppets, I meane, that speake from our mouths; those anticks garnisht in our colours. Is it not strange that I, to whom they all have bin beholding, is it not like that you, to whom they all have bin beholding, shall (were yee in that case that I am now) be both of them at once forsaken? *Yes, trust them not, for there is an upstart crow beautified with our feathers, that with his tygres heart wrapt in a players hide, supposes hee is as well able to bombaste out a blanke verse as the best of you; and being an absolute Johannes fac-totum, is in his own conceit the only Shake-scene in a countrey.* O that I might intreat your rare wittes to be employed in more profitable courses; and let these apes imitate your past excellence, and never more acquaynte them with your admired inventions.”

This tract appears to have been written by Greene not long before his death; for near the conclusion he says, “ Albeit *weakness will scarce suffer me to write*, yet to my fellow-schollers about this city will I direct these few insuing lines.” He died, according to Dr. Gabriel Harvey’s account, on the third of September, 1592².

² Additions by Oldys to Winstanley’s *Lives of the Poets*, Ms.

I have lately met with a very scarce pamphlet entitled *Kind Harts Dreame*, written by Henry Chettle, from the preface to which it appears that *he* was the editor of Greene's *Groatſworth of Wit*, and that it was published between September and December 1592³. Our poet, we find, was not without reason displeased at the preceding allusion to him. As what Chettle ſays of him, correſponds with the character which all his contemporaries have given him, and the piece is extremely rare, I ſhall extract from the Address to the Gentlemen Readers, what relates to the ſubject before us :

“ About three months ſince died M. Robert Greene, leaving many papers in ſundry bookſellers’ hands, among others his *Groatſworth of Wit*, in which a letter written to divers play-makers is offeniſively by one or two of them taken ; and becauſe on the dead they cannot be revenged, they wilfully forge in their conceites a living author : and after toſſing it to and fro, no remedy but it muſt light on me. How I have, all the time of my converſing in printing, hindered the bitter inveighing againſt ſchollers, it hath been very well known ; and how in that I dealt, I can ſufficiently prove. With *neither* of them that take offence was I acquainted, and with one of them [Marlowe] I care not if I never be. The other, [Shakſpeare,] whom at that time I did not ſo much ſpare, as ſince I wiſh I had, for that as I have moderated the hate of living writers, and might have uſed my own diſcretion, (eſpecially in ſuch a caſe, the author being dead,) that I did not, I am as ſorry as if the original fault had been my fault ; becauſe *my ſelfe have ſeen his demeanour no leſs civil than he excellent in the qualitie he profeſſes : Beſides, divers of worſhip have reported his uprightness of dealing, which argues his honeſtie, and his facetious grace in writing, that approves his art.* For

³ Probably in October, for on the Stationers’ books I find *The Repentaunce of Robert Greene, Maſter of Arts*, entered by John Danter, Oct. 6, 1592. The full title of Greene’s pamphlet is, “ Greene’s *Groatſworth of wit bought with a million of repentance.*”

the first, whose learning I reverence, and at the perusing of Greene's booke, strooke out what then in conscience I thought he in some displeasure writ; or had it been true, yet to publish it was intollerable; him I would wish to use me no worse than I deserve. I had onely in the copy this share: it was il written, as sometime Greene's hand was none of the best; licensed it must bee, ere it could be printed, which could never bee if it could not be read. To be brief, I writ it over, and as near as I could followed the copy; onely in that letter I put something out, but in the whole book not a word in; for I protest it was all Greenes, not mine, nor Master Nashe, as some unjustly have affirmed. Neither was he the writer of an Epistle to *The Second Part of Gerileon*; though by the workman's error T. N. were set to the end: that I confesse to be mine, and repent it not.

"Thus, Gentlemen, having noted the private causes that made me nominate myself in print, being as well to purge Master Nashe of what he did not, as to justifie what I did, and withall to confirm what M. Greene did, I beseech you to accept the publick cause, which is both the desire of your delight and common benefit; for though the toye bee shadowed under the title of *Kind Harts Dreame*, it discovers the false hearts of divers that wake to commit mischief," &c.

That I am right in supposing the two who took offence at Greene's pamphlet were Marlowe and Shakspeare, whose names I have inserted in a preceding paragraph in crotchets, appears from the passage itself already quoted; for there was nothing in Greene's exhortation to Lodge and Peele, the other two persons addressed, by which either of them could possibly be offended. Dr. Farmer is of opinion that the second person addressed by Greene is not Lodge, but *Nashe*, who is often called *Jurvenal* by the writers of that time; but that he was not meant, is decisively proved by the extract from Chettle's pamphlet; for he never would have laboured to vindicate Nashe from being the writer of the *Groatf-*

worth of Wit, if any part of it had been professedly addressed to him⁴. Besides, Lodge had written a play in conjunction with Greene, called *A Looking Glass for London and England*, and was authour of some satirical pieces; but we do not know that Nashe and Greene had ever written in conjunction.

Henry Chettle was himself a dramatick writer, and appears to have become acquainted with Shakspeare, or at least seen him, between Sept. 1592, and the following December. Shakspeare was at this time twenty-eight years old; and then we find from the testimony of this writer, *his demeanour was no less civil than he excellent in the qualitie he professed*. From the subsequent paragraph—“Divers of worship have reported his uprightness of dealing, which argues his honestie, and his facetious grace in writing, that approves his art,—” it may be reasonably presumed, that he had exhibited more than one comedy on the stage before the end of the year 1592; perhaps *Love’s Labour’s Lost* in a less perfect state than it now appears in, and *A Midsummer’s Night’s Dream*.

In what time soever he became acquainted with the theatre, we may presume that he had not composed his first piece long before it was acted; for being early incumbered with a young family, and not in very affluent circumstances, it is improbable that he should have suffered it to lie in his closet, without endeavouring to derive some profit from it; and in the miserable state of the drama in those days the meanest of his genuine plays must have been a valuable acquisition, and would hardly have been refused by any of our ancient theatres.

In a *Dissertation on The Three Parts of King Henry VI.* which I have subjoined to those plays, I have mentioned that I do not believe *the First Part of King Henry VI.*

⁴ Nashe himself also takes some pains in an Epistle prefixed to *Pierce Pennilesse*, &c. to vindicate himself from being the authour of Greene’s *Groat’sworth of Wit*.

to have been the composition of Shakspeare; or that at most he wrote but one or two scenes in it. It is unnecessary here to repeat the circumstances on which that opinion is founded. Not being Shakspeare's play, (as I conceive,) at whatever time it might have been first exhibited, it does not interfere with the supposition already stated, that he had not produced any dramattick piece before 1590.

The First Part of K. Henry VI. which, I imagine, was formerly known only by the name of *The historical play of King Henry VI.* had, I suspect, been a very popular piece for some years before 1592, and perhaps was first exhibited in 1588 or in 1589. Nashe in a Tract entitled *Pierce Penniless his Supplication to the Devill*, which was first published in 1592⁵, expressly mentions one of the characters in it, John Talbot Earl of Shrewsbury, who dies in the fourth act of the piece, and who is not, I believe, introduced in any other play of that time. "How" (says he) "would it have joyed brave Talbot, *the terror of the French*⁶, to think that after he had lain two hundred years in his tomb, he should triumph again on the stage, and have his bones new embalmed with the tears of ten thousand spectators at least, (at several times,) who, in the tragedian that represents his person, imagine they behold him fresh bleeding?"

In the Dissertation above referred to, I have endeavoured to prove that this play was written neither by Shakspeare, nor by the authour or authours of the two other plays formed on a subsequent period of the reign of Henry

⁵ *Pierce Penniless his Supplication*, &c. was first published in that year, being entered for the first time on the Stationers' Books by Richard Jones, Aug. 8, 1592. There was a second edition in the same year, printed by Abell Jeffes for John Busbie.

⁶ Thus Talbot is described in *The First Part of K. Henry VI.* Act I. sc. iii.

"Here, said they, is *the terror of the French.*"

Again, in Act V. sc. i.

"Is Talbot slain, the Frenchman's only scourge,

"Your kingdom's terror?"

the Sixth. By whom it *was* written, it is now, I fear, impossible to ascertain. It was not entered on the Stationers' books nor printed till the year 1623, when it was registered with Shakspeare's undisputed plays by the editors of the first folio, and improperly entitled *The Third Part of King Henry VI.* In one sense it might be called so, for two plays on the subject of that reign had been printed before. But considering the history of that king, and the period of time which the piece comprehends, it ought to have been called, what in fact it is, *The First Part of King Henry VI.*

At this distance of time it is impossible to ascertain on what principle it was that our authour's friends, Heminge and Condell, admitted *The First Part of King Henry VI.* into their volume: but I suspect they gave it a place as a necessary introduction to the two other parts, and because Shakspeare had made some slight alterations, and written a few new lines in it.

Titus Andronicus, as well as *The First Part of King Henry VI.* may be referred to the year 1589, or to an earlier period; but not being in the present edition admitted into the regular series of our authour's dramas, I have not given it a place in the preceding table of his plays. In a note prefixed to that play, which may be found in Vol. X. p. 375, I have declared my opinion that *Andronicus* was not written by Shakspeare, or that at most a very few lines in it were written by him; and have stated the reasons on which that opinion is founded. From Ben Jonson's Induction to *Bartholomew Fair*, 1614, we learn that this piece had been exhibited on the stage twenty-five or thirty years before, that is, at the lowest computation, in 1589; or, taking a middle period, (which is perhaps more just,) in 1587. "A booke entitled a *Noble Roman Historie of Titus Andronicus*," (without any authour's name,) was entered at Stationers' Hall by John Danter, Feb. 6, 1593-4. This was undoubtedly the play, as it was printed in that year, according to Langbaine, who alone appears to have seen the first edition, and acted by the servants of the earls of Pembroke, Derby,

Derby, and Suffex. Of this play there was a second edition in quarto in 1611, in the title-page of which neither the name of Shakspeare, (though he was in the zenith of his reputation,) nor of any authour, is found, and therefore we may presume that the title-page of the first edition also (like the entry on the Stationers' books) was anonymous. Marlowe's *King Edward II.* and some other old plays were performed by the servants of the earl of Pembroke, by whom not one of Shakspeare's undisputed dramas was exhibited.

2. } SECOND AND THIRD PARTS OF K. HENRY VI.
3. } 1591.

In a Dissertation annexed to these plays, I have endeavoured to prove that they were not written *originally* by Shakspeare, but formed by him on two preceding dramas, one of which is entitled *The first part of the Contention of the two famous houses of Yorke and Lancaster*, &c. and the other *The true tragedie of Richard duke of Yorke*, &c. My principal object in that dissertation was, to shew from various circumstances that those two old plays, which were printed in 1600, were written by some writer or writers who preceded Shakspeare, and moulded by him, with many alterations and additions, into the shape in which they at present appear in his works under the titles of *The Second and Third Part of K. Henry VI.*; and if I have proved that point, I have obtained my end. I ventured, however, to go somewhat further, and to hazard a conjecture concerning the persons by whom they were composed: but this was not at all material to my principal argument, which, whether my conjectures on that head were well or ill founded, will remain the same.

The passage which has been already quoted from Greene's pamphlet, led me to suspect that these old plays were the production of either him, or Peele, or both of them. I too hastily supposed that the words which have been printed in a former page,—“ Yes, trust them not ;

for there is an upstart crow beautified with *our* feathers," &c. as they immediately followed a paragraph addressed to George Peele, were addressed to him particularly; and consequently that the word *our* meant Peele and Greene, the writer of the pamphlet: but these words manifestly relate equally to the *three* persons previously addressed, and allude to the theatrical compositions of Marlowe, Lodge, Peele, and Greene; whether we consider the writer to lament in general that players avail themselves of the labours of authours, and derive more profit from them than the authours themselves, or suppose him to allude to some particular dramattick performances, which had been originally composed by himself or one of his friends, and thrown into a new form by some other dramatist, who was also a player. The two old plays therefore on which *The Second and Third Parts of King Henry VI.* were formed, may have been written by any one or more of the authours above enumerated. Towards the end of the Essay I have produced a passage from the old *King John*, 1591, from which it appeared to me probable that the two elder dramas, which comprehend the greater part of the reign of *King Henry VI.* were written by the authour of *King John*, who ever he was; and some circumstances which have lately struck me, confirm an opinion which I formerly hazarded, that Christopher Marlowe was the authour of that play. A passage in his historical drama of *King Edward II.* which Dr. Farmer has pointed out to me since the Dissertation was printed, also inclines me to believe, with him, that Marlowe was the authour of one, if not both, of the old dramas on which Shakspeare formed the two plays which in the first folio edition of his works are distinguished by the titles of *The Second and Third Parts of King Henry VI.*

Two lines in *The Third Part of King Henry VI.* have been produced as a decisive and incontrovertible proof that these pieces were originally and entirely written by Shakspeare. "Who" (says Mr. Capell,) "sees not the future monster, and acknowledges at the same time the pen
that

that drew it, in these two lines only, spoken over a king who lies stabb'd before him, [i. e. before Richard duke of Gloster,]—

“What, will the aspiring blood of Lancaster

“Sink in the ground? I thought it would have mounted.”

let him never pretend to discernment hereafter, in any case of this nature.”

The two lines above quoted are found in *The True Tragedie of Richard Duke of Yorke*, &c. on which, according to my hypothesis, Shakspeare's *Third Part of K. Henry VI.* was formed. If therefore these lines decisively mark the hand of Shakspeare, the *old* as well as the *new* play must have been written by him, and the fabrick which I have built with some labour, falls at once to the ground. But let not the reader be alarmed; for if it suffers from no other battery but this, it may last till “the crack of doom.” Marlowe, as Dr. Farmer observes to me, has the very same phraseology in *King Edward II.*

“—— scorning that the lowly earth

“Should drink his blood, mounts up to the air.”

and in the same play I have lately noticed another line in which we find the very epithet here applied to the pious Lancastrian king:

“Frown’st thou thereat, aspiring Lancaster?”

So much for Mr. Capell's irrefragable proof. It is not the proper business of the present essay to enter further into this subject. I merely seize this opportunity of saying, that the preceding passages now incline me to think Marlowe the authour of *The True Tragedie of Richard Duke of Yorke*, &c. and perhaps of the other old drama also, entitled *The first part of the Contention of the two famous houses of Yorke and Lancaster*.

The latter drama was entered on the Stationers' books by T. Millington, March 12, 1593-4. This play, however, (on which *The Second Part of King Henry VI.*

is formed) was not then printed; nor was *The True Tragedie of Richard Duke of Yorke*, &c. on which Shakspeare's *Third Part of K. Henry VI.* is founded, entered at Stationers' Hall at the same time: but they were both printed *anonymously* by Thomas Millington, in quarto, in the year 1600.

A very ingenious friend has suggested to me, that it is not probable that Shakspeare would have ventured to use the ground-work of another dramatist, and form a new play upon it, in the life-time of the authour or authours. I know not how much weight this argument is entitled to. We are certain that Shakspeare *did* transcribe a whole scene almost *verbatim* from *The old Taming of a Shrew*, and incorporate it into his own play on the same subject; and we do not know that the authour of the original play was then dead. Supposing however this argument to have some weight, it does not tend in the slightest degree to overturn my hypothesis that *the Second and Third Parts of King Henry VI.* were formed on the two preceding dramas, of which I have already given the titles; but merely to shew, that I am either mistaken in supposing that they were new-modelled and re-written in 1591, or in my conjecture concerning the authours of the elder pieces on which those of Shakspeare were formed. Greene died in September 1592, and Marlowe about May 1593. By assigning our poet's part in these performances to the end of the year 1593 or the beginning of 1594, this objection is done away, whether we suppose Greene to have been the authour of one of the elder plays, and Marlowe of the other, or that celebrated writer the authour of them both.

Dr. Farmer is of opinion, that Ben Jonson particularly alludes in the following verses to our poet's having followed the steps of Marlowe in the plays now under our consideration, and greatly *surpassed* his original:

“ For, if I thought my judgment were of years,
 “ I should commit thee surely with thy peers;
 “ And tell how much thou did'st our Lily *out-shine*,
 “ Or sporting Kyd, or Marlowe's mighty line.”

From

From the epithet *sporting*, which is applied to Kyd, and which is certainly in some measure a quibble on his name, it is manifest that he must have produced some *comick* piece upon the scene, as well as the two tragedies of his composition, which are now extant, *Cornelia*, and *The Spanish Tragedy*. This latter is printed, like many plays of that time, anonymously. Dr. Farmer with great probability suggests to me, that Kyd might have been the authour of *The old Taming of a Shrew* printed in 1594, on which Shakspeare formed a play with nearly the same title*. The praise which Ben Jonson gives to Shakspeare, that he “*outshines Marlowe and Kyd*,” on this hypothesis, will appear to stand on one and the same foundation; namely on his eclipsing those ancient dramatists by new-modeling their plays, and producing pieces much superior to theirs, on stories which they had already formed into dramas, that, till Shakspeare appeared, satisfied the publick, and were classed among the happiest efforts of dramattick art.

4. A MIDSUMMER-NIGHT'S DREAM, 1592.

The poetry of this piece, glowing with all the warmth of a youthful and lively imagination, the many scenes which it contains of almost continual rhyme⁶, the poverty of the fable, and want of discrimination among the higher personages, dispose me to believe that it was one of our authour's earliest attempts in comedy⁷.

It

* Kyd was also, I suspect, the authour of the old plays of *Hamlet*, and of *King Leir*: See p. 305.

⁶ See p. 294, n. 5.

⁷ Dryden was of opinion that *Pericles, Prince of Tyre*, was our authour's first dramattick composition:

“Shakspeare's own muse his *Pericles* first bore,

“*The Prince of Tyre* was elder than *the Moor*.”

Prologue to the tragedy of *Circe* by Charles D'Avenant, 1677.

Mr. Rowe in his *Life of Shakspeare* (first edition) says, “There is good reason to believe that the greatest part of *Pericles* was not written by him, though it is owned some part of it certainly was, particularly the last act. I have not been able to learn on what authority the latter assertion was grounded. Rowe in his second edition omitted the passage.

Pericles

It seems to have been written, while the ridiculous competitions, prevalent among the histrionick tribe, were strongly impressed by novelty on his mind. He would naturally copy those manners first, with which he was first acquainted. The ambition of a theatrical candidate for applause he has happily ridiculed in *Bottom* the weaver. But among the more dignified persons of the drama we look in vain for any traits of character. The manners of Hippolita, the *Amazon*, are undistinguished from those of other females. Theseus, the associate of Hercules, is not engaged in any adventure worthy of his rank or reputation, nor is he in reality an agent throughout the play. Like K. Henry VIII. he goes out a Maying. He meets the lovers in perplexity, and

Pericles was not entered in the Stationers' books till May 2, 1608, nor printed till 1609; but the following lines in a metrical pamphlet, entitled *Pimlyco, or Runne Red-cap*, 1596, ascertain it to have been written and exhibited on the stage, prior to that year:

- " Amazde I stood to see a crowd
- " Of civil throats stretch'd out so lowd :
- " (As at a new play,) all the roomes
- " Did swarme with gentiles mix'd with groomes ;
- " So that I truly thought all these
- " Came to see *Shore* or *Pericles*."

The play of *Jane Shore* is mentioned (together with another very ancient piece not now extant) in *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, 1613: "I was ne'er at one of these plays before; but I should have seen *Jane Shore*, and my husband hath promised me any time this twelvemonth to carry me to *The Bold Beauchamps*." The date of *The Bold Beauchamps* is in some measure ascertained by a passage in D'Avenant's *Playhouse to be let*:

- " ——— There is an old tradition,
- " That in the times of mighty *Tamburlaine*,
- " Of conjuring *Faustus*, and the *Beauchamps Bold*,
- " You poets used to have the second day."

Tamberlain and *Faustus* were exhibited in or before 1590.

The lamentable end of Shore's wife also made a part of the old anonymous play of *King Richard III.* which was entered in the Stationers' books, June 19, 1594. Both the dramas in which *Jane Shore* was introduced were probably on the stage soon after 1590; and from the manner in which *Pericles* is mentioned in the verses above quoted, we may presume, that drama was equally ancient and equally well known.

makes

makes no effort to promote their happiness; but when supernatural accidents have reconciled them, he joins their company, and concludes his day's entertainment by uttering some miserable puns at an interlude represented by a troop of clowns. Over the fairy part of the drama he cannot be supposed to have any influence. This part of the fable, indeed, (at least as much of it as relates to the quarrels of Oberon and Titania,) was not of our authour's invention³.—Through the whole piece, the more exalted characters are subservient to the interests of those beneath them. We laugh with Bottom and his fellows, but is a single passion agitated by the faint and childish sollicitudes of Hermia and Demetrius, of Helena and Lysander, those shadows of each other?—That a drama, of which the principal personages are thus insignificant, and the fable thus meagre and uninteresting, was one of our authour's earliest compositions, does not, therefore, seem a very improbable conjecture; nor are the beauties with which it is embellished, inconsistent with this supposition; for the genius of Shakspeare, even in its minority, could embroider the coarsest materials with the brightest and most lasting colours.

Oberon and Titania had been introduced in a drama-

³ The learned editor of *Chaucer's Canterbury Tales*, printed in 1775, observes in his introductory discourse, (Vol. IV. p. 161,) that Pluto and Proserpina in the Marchant's Tale, appear to have been "the true progenitors of Shakspeare's Oberon and Titania." In a tract already quoted, *Greene's Groatsworth of Witte*, 1592, a player is introduced, who boasts of having performed the part of *the King of Fairies* with applause. Greene himself wrote a play, entitled *The Scottishe Historie of James the Fourth, slaine at Floddon, intermixed with a pleasant Comedie presented by Oberon King of Fayeries*; which was entered at Stationers' hall in 1594, and printed in 1598. Shakspeare, however, does not appear to have been indebted to this piece. The plan of it is shortly this. Bohan, a Scot, in consequence of being disgusted with the world, having retired to a tomb where he has fixed his dwelling, is met by *After Oberon*, king of the fairies, who entertains him with an antick or dance by his subjects. These two personages, after some conversation, determine to listen to a tragedy, which is acted before them, and to which they make a kind of chorus, by moralizing at the end of each act.

tick entertainment exhibited before Queen Elizabeth in 1591, when she was at Elvetham in Hampshire; as appears from *A Description of the Queene's Entertainment in Progresse at Lord Hartford's*, &c. printed in 4to. in 1591. Her majesty, after having been pestered a whole afternoon with speeches in verse from the three Graces, Sylvanus, Wood Nymphs, &c. is at length addressed by the Fairy Queen, who presents her majesty with a chaplet,

“ Given me by Auberon [Oberon] the fairie king.”

A Midsummer-Night's Dream was not entered at Stationers' hall till Oct. 8, 1600, in which year it was printed; but is mentioned by Meres in 1598.

From the comedy of *Dr. Dodipoll* Mr. Steevens has quoted a line, which the authour seems to have borrowed from Shakspeare:

“ 'Twas I that led you through the painted meads,
“ Where the light *fairies* danc'd upon the *flowers*,
“ *Hanging in every leaf an orient pearl.*”

So, in *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*:

“ And *hang a pearl* in ev'ry cowslip's ear.”

Again:

“ And that same dew, which sometimes on the buds
“ Was wont to swell, like round and *orient pearls*,
“ Stood now within the pretty *flouret's* eyes,
“ Like tears,” &c.

There is no earlier edition of the anonymous play in which the foregoing lines are found, than that in 1600; but *Dr. Dodipowle* is mentioned by Nashe, in his preface to *Gabriel Harvey's Hunt is up*, printed in 1596.

The passage in the fifth act, which has been thought to allude to the death of Spenser⁹, is not inconsistent with the early appearance of this comedy; for it might have been inserted between the time of that poet's death, and the year 1600, when the play was published. And indeed, if the allusion was intended, which I do not

⁹ “ The thrice three muses, mourning for the death
“ Of learning, late deceas'd in beggary.”

believe, the passage must have been added in that interval; for *A Midsummer-Night's Dream* was certainly written in, or before, 1598. and Spenser, we are told by Sir James Ware, (whose testimony with respect to this controverted point must have great weight,) did not die till 1599: "others, (he adds,) have it *wrongly*, 1598⁹."

⁹ Preface to Spenser's *View of the State of Ireland*. Dublin, fol. 1633. This treatise was written, according to Sir James Ware, in 1596. The testimony of that historian, relative to the time of Spenser's death, is confirmed by a fact related by Ben Jonson to Mr. Drummond of Hawthornden, and recorded by that writer. When Spenser and his wife were forced in great distress to fly from their house, which was burnt in the Irish Rebellion, the Earl of Essex sent him twenty pieces; but he refused them; telling the person that brought them, he was sure he had no time to spend them. He died soon afterwards, according to Ben Jonson's account, in King-street. Lord Essex was not in Ireland in 1598, and was there from April to September in the following year.

It should also be remembered that verses by Spenser are prefixed to Lewknor's *Commonwealth and Government of Venice*, published in 1599.

That this celebrated poet was alive in Sept. 1598, is proved by the following paper, addressed by Queen Elizabeth to the Lords Justices of Ireland, which is preserved in the Museum, *Mss. Harl.* 286, and has not, I believe, been noticed by any of his biographers:

Last of Sept. 1598.

‘ To the Lords Justices of Ireland.

‘ Though we doubt not but you will without any motion from us have good regard for the appointing of meete and serviceable persons to be Sheriffs in the severall counties, which is a matter of great importance, especially at this time, when all parts of the realme are tinged with the infection of rebellion, yet wee thinke it not amiss sometime to recommend unto you such men as wee should [wish] to have for that office. Among whom we may justly reckon Edm. Spenser, a gentleman dwelling in the county of Corke, who is so well known unto you all for his good and commendable parts, (being a man endowed with good knowledge in learning, and not unskilful or without experience in the service of the warres,) as we need not use many words in his behalf. And therefore as we are of opinion that you will favour him for himselfe and of your own accord, so we do pray you that this letter may increase his credit so far forth with you as that he may not faile to be appointed Sheriffe of the county of Corke, unlesse there be to you knowne some important cause to the contrary.

‘ We are perswaded he will so behave himselfe in this particular as you shall have just cause to allowe of our recommendation, and his good service. And so,’ &c.

So

So careful a searcher into antiquity, who lived so near the time, is not likely to have been mistaken in a fact, concerning which he appears to have made particular inquiries.

The passage in question, however, in my apprehension, has been misunderstood. It relates, I conceive, not to the death of Spenser, but to *the nine Muses lamenting the decay of learning*, in that authour's poem entitled *The Tears of the Muses*, which was published in 1591: and hence probably the words, "*late deceas'd in beggary.*" This allusion, if I am right in my conjecture, may serve to confirm the date assigned to *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*.

5. COMEDY OF ERRORS, 1593.

The only note of time that occurs in this play is found in the following passage:

"*Ant. S.* In what part of her body stands—*France?*"

"*Drom. S.* In her forehead, arm'd and reverted, making war against the *hair.*"

I have no doubt that an equivoque was here intended, and that, beside the obvious sense, an allusion was intended to King Henry IV. the *beir* of France*, concerning whose succession to the throne there was a civil war in that country, from August 1589, when his father was assassinated, for several years. Henry, after struggling long against the power and force of the League, extricated himself from all his difficulties by embracing the Roman Catholick religion at St. Denis, on Sunday the 25th of July 1593, and was crowned king of France in Feb. 1594; I therefore imagine this play was written before that period. In 1591 Lord Essex was sent with 4000 troops to the French king's assistance, and his brother Walter was killed before Rouen in Normandy. From that time till Henry was peaceably settled on the throne, many bodies of troops were sent by Q. Elizabeth

* The words *beir* and *hair* were, I make no doubt, pronounced alike in Shakspeare's time, and hence they are frequently confounded in the old copies of his plays.

to his aid : so that his situation must then have been a matter of notoriety, and a subject of conversation in England.

This play was neither entered on the Stationers' books, nor printed, till 1623, but is mentioned by Meres in 1598, and exhibits internal proofs of having been one of Shakspeare's earliest productions. I formerly supposed that it could not have been written till 1596; because the translation of the *Menæchmi* of Plautus, from which the plot appears to have been taken, was not published till 1595. But on a more attentive examination of that translation, I find that Shakspeare might have seen it before publication; for from the printer's advertisement to the reader, it appears that for some time before it had been handed about in Ms. among the translator's friends. The piece was entered at Stationers'-Hall, June 10, 1594, and as the authour had translated all the comedies of Plautus, it may be presumed that the whole work had been the employment of some years: and this might have been one of the earliest translated. Shakspeare must also have read some other account of the same story not yet discovered; for how otherwise could he have got the names of *Erraticus* and *Surreptus*, which do not occur in the translation of Plautus? There the brothers are called *Menæchmus Socrates*, and *Menæchmus the traveller*.

The alternate rhymes that are found in this play, as well as in *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, *Love's Labour's Lost*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, and *Romeo and Juliet*, are a further proof that these pieces were among our authour's earliest productions. We are told by himself that *Venus and Adonis* was "the first heir of his invention." *The Rape of Lucrece* probably followed soon afterwards. When he turned his thoughts to the stage, the measure which he had used in those poems, naturally presented itself to him in his first dramattick essays: I mean in those plays which were written originally by himself. In those which were grounded, like the *Henries*, on the preceding productions of other men, he naturally followed the example before him, and consequently in those pieces no alternate rhymes are found.

The doggerel measure, which, if I recollect right, is employed in none of our authour's plays except *The Comedy of Errors*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, and *Love's Labour's Lost*, also adds support to the dates assigned to these plays: for these long doggerel verses, as I have observed in a note at the end of the piece now under our consideration, are written in that kind of metre which was usually attributed by the dramattick poets before his time to some of their inferior characters. He was imperceptibly infected with the prevailing mode in these his early compositions; but soon learned to 'deviate boldly from the common track,' left by preceding writers.

A play with the same title as that before us, was exhibited at Gray's-inn in December 1594; but I know not whether it was Shakspeare's play, or a translation from Plautus. "After such sports," (says the writer of *Gesta Grayorum*, 1688,) a *Comedy of Errors*, like to Plautus his *Menechmus*, was played by the players: so that night was begun and continued to the end in nothing but confusion and errors. Whereupon it was ever afterwards called *the Night of Errors*." The Registers of Gray's-inn have been examined for the purpose of ascertaining whether the play above-mentioned was our authour's; but they afford no information on the subject.

From its having been represented, by *the players*, not by the gentlemen of the inn, I think it probable that it was Shakspeare's piece.

The name of *Dowdabel*, which is mentioned in this play, occurs likewise in an Eclogue entitled *The Shepherd's Garland*, by Michael Drayton, printed in 4to. in 1593.

6. THE TAMING OF THE SHREW, 1594.

This play and *The Winter's Tale* are the only pieces which I have found reason, since the first edition of this Essay appeared, to attribute to an era widely different from

from that in which I had originally placed them¹. I had supposed the piece now under consideration to have been written in the year 1606. On a more attentive perusal of it, and more experience in our authour's style and manner, I am persuaded that it was one of his very early productions, and near in point of time to *The Comedy of Errors*, *Love's Labour's Lost*, and *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*.

In the old comedies antecedent to the time of our authour's writing for the stage, (if indeed they deserve that name) a kind of doggrel measure is often found, which, as I have already observed, Shakspeare adopted in some of those pieces which were undoubtedly among his early compositions; I mean his *Errors*, and *Love's Labour's Lost*. This kind of metre being found also in the play before us, adds support to the supposition that it was one of his early productions. The last four lines of this comedy furnish an example of the measure I allude to:

“ 'Twas I won the wager, though you hit the white,
 “ And being a winner, God give you good night.
 “ Now go thy ways, thou hast tam'd a curst shrew,
 “ 'Tis a wonder, by your leave, she will be tam'd so.”

Another proof of *The Taming of the Shrew* being an early production arises from the frequent play of words which we find in it, and which Shakspeare has condemned in a subsequent comedy.

Some of the incidents in this comedy are taken from the *Supposes* of Gascoigne, an authour of considerable popularity, when Shakspeare first began to write for the stage.

The old piece entitled *The Taming of a Shrew*, on which our authour's play is founded, was entered on

¹ A minute change has been made in the arrangement of five other plays; *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *Love's Labour's Lost*, *The two Gentlemen of Verona*, and *Cymbeline*; but the variation is not more than a period of two or three years.

the Stationers' books by Peter Short, May 2, 1594, and probably soon afterwards printed. As it bore nearly the same title with Shakspeare's play, (which was not printed till 1623,) the hope of getting a sale for it under the shelter of a celebrated name, was probably the inducement to issue it out at that time; and its entry at Stationers'-hall, and publication in 1594, (for from the passage quoted below it must have been published²;) gives weight to the supposition that Shakspeare's play was written and first acted in that year. There being no edition of the genuine play in print, the bookseller hoped that the old piece with a similar title might pass on the common reader for Shakspeare's performance. This appears to have been a frequent practice of the booksellers in those days; for Rowley's play of *K. Henry VIII.* I am persuaded, was published in 1605, and 1613, with the same view; as were *King Leir and his three daughters* in 1605, and Lord Sterline's *Julius Cæsar* in 1607.

In the year 1607 it is highly probable that this comedy of our authour's was revived, for in that year Nicholas Ling republished *The old Taming of a Shrew*, with the same intent, as it should seem, with which that piece had originally been issued out by another bookseller in 1594. In the entry made by Ling in the Stationers' books, January 22, 1606-7, he joined with this old drama two of Shakspeare's genuine plays, *Romeo and Juliet* and *Love's Labour's Lost*, neither of which he ever published, nor does his name appear in the title-page of any one of our authour's performances: So that those two plays could only have been set down by him, along with the other, with some fraudulent intent.

² From a passage in a tract written by Sir John Harrington, entitled *The Metamorphosis of Ajax*, 1596, this old play appears to have been printed before that time, probably in the year 1594, when it was entered at Stationers'-hall; though no edition of so early a date has hitherto been discovered. "Read" (says Sir John) "the booke of *Taming a Shrew*, which hath made a number of us so perfect, that now every one can rule a shrew in our country, save he that hath her."

In the same year also, (Nov. 17) our authour's genuine play was entered at Stationers-hall by John Smethwyck³ (one of the proprietors of the second folio); which circumstance gives additional weight to the supposition that the play was *revived* in that year. Smethwyck had probably procured a copy of it, and had then thoughts of printing it, though for some reason, now undiscoverable, it was not printed by him till 1631, eight years after it had appeared in the edition by the players in folio.

It should be observed that there is a slight variation between the titles of the anonymous play and Shakspeare's piece; both of which, in consequence of the inaccuracy of Mr. Pope, and his being very superficially acquainted with the phraseology and manner of our early writers, were for a long time unjustly attributed to our poet. The old drama was called *The Taming of a Shrew*; Shakspeare's comedy, *The Taming of the Shrew*.

It must not be concealed, however, that *The Taming of the Shrew* is not enumerated among our authour's plays by Meres in 1598; a circumstance which yet is not sufficient to prove that it was not then written: for neither is *Hamlet* nor *The Second and Third Parts of King Henry VI.* mentioned by him; though those three plays had undoubtedly appeared before that year.

I formerly imagined that a line⁴ in this comedy alluded to an old play written by Thomas Heywood, entitled *A Woman kill'd with kindness*, of which the second edition was printed in 1607, and the first probably not before the year 1600; but the other proofs which I have already stated with respect to the date of the play before us, have convinced me that I was mistaken.

3 For this bookseller *Romeo and Juliet* was printed in 4to. in 1609, and an edition of *Hamlet* without date; the latter probably was printed either in that year or 1607.

4 "This is the way to kill a wife with kindness." *Taming of the Shrew*, Act IV. sc. i. Heywood's play is mentioned in *The Black Booke*, 4to. 1604. I am not possessed of the first edition of it, nor is it in any of the great collections of old plays that I have seen.

7. LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST, 1594.

Shakspeare's natural disposition leading him, as Dr. Johnson has observed, to comedy, it is highly probable that his first *original* dramattick production was of the comick kind: and of his comedies *Love's Labour's Lost* appears to me to bear strong marks of having been one of his earliest essays. The frequent rhymes with which it abounds⁵, of which, in his early performances he seems to have been extremely fond, its imperfect versification, its artless and desultory dialogue, and the irregularity of the composition, may be all urged in support of this conjecture.

Love's Labour's Lost was not entered at Stationers-hall till the 22d of January 1606-7, but is mentioned by Francis Meres⁶, in his *Wit's Treasury, being the Second Part*

⁵ As this circumstance is more than once mentioned, in the course of these observations, it may not be improper to add a few words on the subject of our authour's metre. A mixture of rhymes with blank verse, in the same play, and sometimes in the same scene, is found in almost all his pieces, and is not peculiar to Shakspeare, being also found in the works of Jonson, and almost all our ancient dramattick writers. It is not, therefore, merely the use of rhymes, mingled with blank verse, but their *frequency*, that is here urged, as a circumstance which seems to characterize and distinguish our poet's earliest performances. In the whole number of pieces which were written antecedent to the year 1600, and which, for the sake of perspicuity, have been called his *early compositions*, more rhyming couplets are found, than in all the plays composed subsequently to that year; which have been named his *late productions*. Whether in process of time Shakspeare grew weary of the bondage of rhyme, or whether he became convinced of its impropriety in a dramattick dialogue, his neglect of rhyming (for he never wholly disused it) seems to have been *gradual*. As, therefore, most of his early productions are characterized by the multitude of similar terminations which they exhibit, whenever of two early pieces it is doubtful which preceded the other, I am disposed to believe, (other proofs being wanting) that play in which the greater number of rhymes is found, to have been first composed. The plays founded on the story of King Henry VI. do not indeed abound in rhymes; but this probably arose from their being *originally* constructed by preceding writers.

⁶ This writer, to whose list of our authour's plays we are so much indebted,

*Part of Wit's Commonwealth*⁷, in 1598, and was printed in that year. In the title-page of this edition, (the oldest hitherto discovered,) this piece is said to have been presented before her highness [Queen Elizabeth] the last Christmas, [1597,] and to be newly corrected and augmented: from which it should seem, either that there had been a former impression, or that the play had been originally represented in a less perfect state, than that in which it appears at present.

I think it probable that our authour's first draft of this play was written in or before 1594; and that some additions were made to it between that year and 1597, when it was exhibited before the Queen. One of those additions may have been the passage which seems to allude to *The Metamorphosis of Ajax*, by Sir John Harrington, printed in 1596: "Your lion—will be given to *A-jax**." This, however, is not certain; for the conceit of *A-jax* and a *jakes* may not have originated with Harrington, and may hereafter be found in some more ancient tract.

In this comedy Don Armado says,—“The first and second cause will not serve my turn: the *passado* he respects not, the *duello* he regards not: his disgrace is to be called boy; but his glory is to subdue man.” Shakspeare seems here to have had in his thoughts Saviolo's *Treatise Of honour and honourable quarrels*, published in 1595⁸. This passage also may have been an addition.

indebted, appears, from the following passage of the work here mentioned, to have been personally acquainted with Shakspeare:

“As the soul of Euphorbus was thought to live in Pythagoras, so the sweet witty soul of Ovid lives in mellifluous and honey-tongued Shakspeare. Witnes his *Venus and Adonis*, his *Lucrece*, his sugred *Sonnets* among his private friends,” &c. *Wit's Treasury*, p. 282. There is no edition of Shakspeare's *Sonnets*, now extant, of so early a date as 1598, when Meres's book was printed; so that we may conclude, he was one of those friends to whom they were privately recited, before their publication.

⁷ This book was probably published in the latter end of the year 1598; for it was not entered at Stationers-hall till September in that year.

* See Vol. II. p. 423, n. 8.

⁸ See a note on *As you like it*, Vol. III. p. 228, n. 8.

Bankes's horse, which is mentioned in the play before us, had been exhibited in London in or before 1589, as appears from a story recorded in Tarlton's *Jests*⁹.

In this comedy there is more attempt at delineation of character than in either *The Comedy of Errors* or *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*; a circumstance which inclines me to think that it was written subsequently to those plays. Biron and Catharine, as Mr. Steevens, I think, has observed, are faint prototypes of Benedick and Beatrice.

The doggrel verses in this piece, like those in *The Comedy of Errors*, are longer and more hobbling than those which have been quoted from *The Taming of the Shrew*:

" You two are bookmen ; can you tell by your wit

" What was a month old at Cain's birth, that's not five weeks old as yet ?"—

" O' my truth most sweet jests ! most incony vulgar wit,

" When it comes so smoothly off, so obscenely as it were, so fit," &c.

9 " There was one Bankes in the time of Tarlton, who served the Earl of Essex, and had a horse of strange qualities ; and being at the Crofs Keyes in Gracious-streete, getting money with him, as he was mightily resorted to, Tarlton then (with his fellowes) playing at the Bell [*i. e.* Bull] by, came into the Crofs keyes, amongst many people to see fashions : which Bankes perceiving, to make the people laugh, saies, Signior, to his horse, *go, fetch me the veriest foole in the company.* The jade comes immediately, and with his mouth drawes Tarlton forth. Tarlton, with merry words, said nothing but *God-a-mercy, horse.* In the end Tarlton, seeing the people laugh so, was angry inwardly, and said, *Sir, had I power of your horse, as you have, I would do more than that.* Whate'er it be, said Bankes, to please him, *I will charge him to do it.* Then, saies Tarlton, *charge him to bring me the veryest whore-master in the company.* He shall, saies Bankes. Signior, saies he, *bring Master Tarlton the veryest whore-master in the company.* The horse leads his master to him. Then *God-a-mercy, horse,* indeed saies Tarlton. The people had much ado to keep peace : but Bankes and Tarlton had like to have squared, and the horse by, to give aime. But ever after it was a by word thorow London, *God'-a-mercy, horse ! and is to this day.*" Tarlton's *Jests*, 4to. 1611.—Tarlton died in 1589.

This

This play is mentioned in a mean poem entitled *Alba, the months minde of a melancholy Lover*, by R. T. Gentleman, printed in 1598:

" *Love's Labour Lost* I once did see, a play
 " Y-cleped so, so called to my paine,
 " Which I to heare to my small joy did stay,
 " Giving attendance to my froward dame;
 " My misgiving mind presaging to me ill,
 " Yet was I drawne to see it 'gainst my will.

* * * *

" Each after plaid in cunning wise his part,
 " But chiefly those entrapt in Cupid's snare ;
 " Yet all was fained, 'twas not from the hart,
 " They seeme to grieve, but yet they felt no care :
 " 'Twas I that grieve indeed did beare in brest,
 " The others did but make a shew in jest."

Mr. Gildon, in his observations on *Love's Labour's Lost*, says, he “ cannot see why the authour gave it this name.”—The following lines exhibit the train of thoughts, which probably suggested to Shakspeare this title, as well as that which anciently was affixed to another of his comedies,—*Love's Labour Won*.

" To be *in love*, where scorn is bought with groans,
 " Coy looks with heart-fore sighs ; one fading moment's
 " With twenty watchful, weary, tedious nights :
 " If haply *won*, perhaps a hapless gain ;
 " If *lost*, why then a grievous *labour won*."

Two Gentlemen of Verona. Act I. sc. i.

8. TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA, 1595.

This comedy was not entered on the books of the Stationers' Company till 1623, at which time it was first printed; but is mentioned by Meres in 1598, and bears strong internal marks of an early composition. The comick parts of it are of the same colour with the comick parts of *Love's Labour's Lost*, *The Comedy of Errors*, and *A Mid-*

A Midsummer-Night's Dream; and the serious scenes are eminently distinguished by that elegant and pastoral simplicity which might be expected from the early effusions of such a mind as Shakspeare's, when employed in describing the effects of love. In this piece also, as in *The Comedy of Errors* and *Lowe's Labour's Lost*, some alternate verses are found.

Sir William Blackstone concurs with me in opinion on this subject; observing, that "one of the great faults of *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* is the hastening too abruptly and without preparation to the denouement, which shews that it was one of Shakspeare's very early performances."

The following lines in Act I. sc. iii. have induced me to ascribe this play to the year 1595:

" — He wonder'd, that your lordship
 " Would suffer him to spend his youth at home,
 " While other men, of slender reputation,
 " Put forth their sons to seek preferment out:
 " *Some to the wars, to try their fortunes there,*
 " *Some, to discover islands far away."*

Shakspeare, as has been often observed, gives to almost every country the manners of his own: and though the speaker is here a Veronese, the poet, when he wrote the last two lines, was thinking of England; where voyages for the purpose of *discovering islands far away* were at this time much prosecuted. In 1595 Sir Walter Rawleigh undertook a voyage to the island of Trinidad, from which he made an expedition up the river Orinoco, to discover Guiana. Sir Humphry Gilbert had gone on a similar voyage of discovery the preceding year.

The particular situation of England in 1595 may have suggested the line above quoted: "Some to the wars, &c. In that year it was generally believed that the Spaniards meditated a second invasion of England with a much more powerful and better appointed Armada than that which had been defeated in 1588. Soldiers were levied
 with

with great diligence and placed on the sea-coasts, and two great fleets were equipped; one to encounter the enemy in the British seas; the other to sail to the West-Indies, under the command of Hawkins and Drake, to attack the Spaniards in their own territories. About the same time also Elizabeth sent a considerable body of troops to the assistance of King Henry IV. of France, who had entered into an offensive and defensive alliance with the English Queen, and had newly declared war against Spain. Our authour therefore, we see, had abundant reason for both the lines before us:

“ Some to the wars, to try their fortunes there,
 “ Some to discover islands far away.”

Among the marks of love, Speed in this play (Act II. sc. i.) enumerates the walking alone, “ like one that had the pestilence.” In the year 1593 there had been a great plague, which carried off near eleven thousand persons in London. Shakspeare was undoubtedly there at that time, and his own recollection probably furnished him with this image. There had not been a great plague in the metropolis, if I remember right, since that of 1564, of which our poet could have no personal knowledge, having been born in that year.

Valentinus putting himself at the head of a band of outlaws in this piece, has been supposed to be copied from Sydney's *Arcadia*, where Pylades heads the Helots. The first edition of the *Arcadia* was in 1590.

In *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* there are two allusions to the story of Hero and Leander, which I suspect Shakspeare had read recently before he composed this play. Marlowe's poem on that subject was entered at Stationers-hall, Sept. 18, 1593, and I believe was published in that or the following year, though I have met with no copy earlier than that printed in quarto in 1598. Though that should have been the first edition, Shakspeare might yet have read this poem soon after the authour's death in 1593: for Marlowe's fame was deservedly so high, that a piece left by him for publication

tion was probably handed about in manuscript among his theatrical acquaintances antecedent to its being issued from the press.

In the following lines of this play,

“ Why, Phaeton, (for thou art Merops’ son,)
 “ Wilt thou aspire to guide the heavenly car,
 “ And with thy daring folly burn the world ?”

the poet, as Mr. Steevens has observed, might have been furnished with his mythology by the old play of *King John*, in two parts, 4to. 1591 :

“ — as sometimes *Phaeton*,
 “ Mistrusting silly *Merops* for his fire.”

If I am right in supposing our authour’s *King John* to have been written in 1596, it is not improbable that he read the old play with particular attention antecedently to his sitting down to compose a new drama on the same subject ; perhaps in the preceding year : and this circumstance may add some weight to the date now assigned to the play before us.

9. ROMEO AND JULIET, 1595.

It has been already observed, that our authour in his early plays appears to have been much addicted to rhyming ; a practice from which he gradually departed, though he never wholly deserted it. In this piece *more* rhymes, I believe, are found, than in any other of his plays, *Love’s Labour’s Lost* and *A Midsummer-Night’s Dream* only excepted. This circumstance, the story on which it is founded, so likely to captivate a young poet, the imperfect form in which it originally appeared, and its very early publication¹, all incline me to believe that this was Shakspeare’s first tragedy ; for the three parts of *K. Henry VI.* do not pretend to that title.

¹ There is no edition of any of our authour’s genuine plays extant, prior to 1597, when *Romeo and Juliet* was published.

“ A new

"A new ballad of *Romeo and Juliet*," (perhaps our authour's play,) was entered on the Stationers' books, August 5, 1596², and the first sketch of the play was printed in 1597; but it did not appear in its present form till two years afterwards.

This tragedy was originally represented by the servants of Lord Hunsdon, who was appointed Lord Chamberlain to Queen Elizabeth in 1585, and died in July 1596. As it appears from the title-page of the original edition in 1597, that *Romeo and Juliet* had been often acted by the servants of that nobleman, it probably had been represented in the preceding year.

In the third act *the first and second cause* are mentioned: that passage therefore was probably written after the publication of Saviolo's Book on *Honour and honourable quarrels*; which appeared in 1595.

From several passages in the fifth act of this tragedy it is manifest, I think, that Shakspeare had recently read, and remembered, some of the lines in Daniel's *Complaint of Rosamond*, which, I believe, was printed in 1592³:
the

² There is no entry in the Stationers' books relative to the tragedy of *Romeo and Juliet*, antecedent to its publication in 1597, if this does not relate to it. This entry was made by Edward Whyte, and therefore is not likely to have related to the poem called *Romeo and Julietta*, which was entered in 1582, by Richard Tottel. How vague the description of plays was at this time, may appear from the following entry, which is found in the Stationers' books, an. 1590, and seems to relate to Marlowe's *tragedy* of *Tamburlaine*, published in that year, by Richard Jones.

"To Richard Jones] Twoe Commical *Discourses* of Tamburlein, the Cythian Shepparde."

In Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*, as originally performed, several comick interludes were introduced; whence perhaps, the epithet *comical* was added to the title.—As tragedies were sometimes entitled *discourses*, so a grave poem or *sad discourse* in verse, (to use the language of the time) was frequently denominated a *tragedy*. All the poems inserted in the *Mirror for Magistrates*, and some of Drayton's pieces, are called *tragedies*, by Meres and other ancient writers. Some of Sir David Lindsay's poems, though not in a dramattick form, are also by their authour entitled *tragedies*.

³ "A booke called *Delia*, containynge diuerse sonates, with *the Complainte of Rosamonde*," was entered at Stationers-hall by Simon Waterfon

the earliest edition, however, that I have seen of that piece is dated in 1594:

“ And nought-respecting death, the last of paines,
 “ Plac’d his *pale colours*, (the *ensign* of his might,)
 “ Upon his new-got spoil,” &c. *Complaint of Rosamond.*

“ ——— beauty’s *ensign* yet
 “ Is crimson in thy lips, and in thy cheeks,
 “ And *death’s pale flag*,” &c. *Romeo and Juliet.*

“ Decayed roses of discolour’d cheeks
 “ Do yet retain some notes of former grace,
 “ And ugly death sits faire within her face.”

Complaint of Rosamond.

“ Death that hath suck’d the honey of thy breath,
 “ Hath had no power yet upon thy beauty.”

Romeo and Juliet.

“ Ah now methinks I see death dallying seeks

“ To entertain it selfe in love’s sweet place.”

Complaint of Rosamond.

“ ——— Shall I believe

“ That unsubstantial death is *amorous*?”

Romeo and Juliet.

If the following passage in an old comedy already mentioned, entitled *Dr. Dodipoll*, which had appeared before 1596, be considered as an imitation, it may add some weight to the supposition that *Romeo and Juliet* had been exhibited before that year:

“ The glorious parts of fair Lucilia,
 “ Take them and join them in the heavenly spheres,
 “ And fix them there as an eternal light,
 “ For lovers to adore and wonder at.” *Dr. Dodipoll.*
 “ Take him and cut him out in little stars,
 “ And he will make the face of heaven so fine,
 “ That all the world shall be in love with night,
 “ And pay no worship to the garish sun.”

Romeo and Juliet.

Waterson in Feb. 1591-2, and the latter piece is commended by Nashe in a tract entitled *Pierse Pennilesse his Supplication to the Divell*, published in 1592.

In

In the fifth act of this tragedy mention is made of the practice of sealing up the doors of those houses in which "the infectious pestilence did reign." Shakspeare probably had himself seen this practised in the plague which raged in London in 1593.

From a speech of the Nurse in this play, which contains these words—"It is now since the earthquake eleven years," &c. Mr. Tyrwhitt conjectured, that *Romeo and Juliet*, or at least part of it, was written in 1591; the novels from which Shakspeare may be supposed to have drawn his story, not mentioning any such circumstance; while, on the other hand, there actually was an earthquake in England on the 6th of April, 1580, which he might here have had in view⁴.—It formerly seemed improbable to me that Shakspeare, when he was writing this tragedy, should have adverted, with such precision, to the date of an earthquake which had been felt in his youth. The passage quoted struck me, as only displaying one of those characteristical traits, which distinguish old people of the lower class; who delight in enumerating a multitude of minute circumstances that have no relation to the business immediately under their consideration⁵, and are particularly fond of computing time from extraordinary events, such as battles, comets, plagues, and earthquakes. This feature of their character our authour has in various places strongly marked. Thus (to mention one of many instances,) the Grave-digger in *Hamlet* says, that he came to his employment, "of all the days i'the year, that day that the last king o'ercame *Fortinbras*,—that very day that young *Hamlet* was born."—A more attentive perusal, however, of our poet's works, and his frequent allusions to the manners and usages of England, and to the events of

⁴ See *Romeo and Juliet*, Act I. sc. iii.

⁵ Thus Mrs. Quickly in *K. Henry IV.* reminds Falstaff, that he "swore on a parcel-gilt goblet, to marry her, sitting in her dolphin chamber, at a round table, by a sea-coal fire, on Wednesday in Whitsun-week, when the prince broke his head for likening his father to a singing man of Windsor."

his own time, which he has described as taking place wherever his scene happens to lie, have shewn me that Mr. Tyrwhitt's conjecture is not so improbable as I once supposed it. Shakspeare might have laid the foundation of this play in 1591, and finished it at a subsequent period. The passage alluded to is in the *first* act.

If the earthquake which happened in England in 1580, was in his thoughts, when he composed the first part of this play, and induced him to state the earthquake at Verona as happening on the day on which Juliet was *sweaned*, and *eleven* years before the commencement of the piece, it has led him into a contradiction; for according to the Nurse's account Juliet was within a fortnight and odd days of completing her *fourteenth* year; and yet according to the computation made she could not well be much more than *twelve* years old. Whether indeed the English earthquake was, or was not, in his thoughts, the nurse's account is inconsistent, and contradictory.

Perhaps Shakspeare was more careful to mark the garrulity, than the precision, of the old woman:—or perhaps, he meant this very incorrectness as a trait of her character:—or, without having recourse to either of these suppositions, shall we say, that our authour was here, as in some other places, hasty and inattentive? It is certain that there is nothing in which he is less accurate, than the computation of time. Of his negligence in this respect, *As you Like it*, *Measure for Measure*, and *Othello*, furnish remarkable instances⁶.

10. HAMLET, 1596.

The following passage is found in *An Epistle to the Gentlemen Students of the Two Universities* by Thomas

⁶ See *Measure for Measure*, Act I. sc. iii. and iv.—*As you like it*, Act IV. sc. i. and iii.—*Othello*, Act III. sc. iii. "I slept the *next* night well," &c.

Nashe, prefixed to Greene's *Arcadia*, which was published in 1589:—"I will turn back to my first text of studies of delight, and talk a little in friendship with a few of our trivial translators. It is a common practice now a-days, among a sort of shifting companions, that runne through every art, and thrive by none, to leave the trade of *Noverint*, whereto they were born, and busie themselves with the endeavors of art, that could scarcely latinize their neck-verse if they should have neede; yet English *Seneca*, read by candle-light, yeelds many good sentences, as *Bloud is a beggar*, and so forth: and, if you intreat him faire in a frosty morning, he will afford you whole *Hamlets*, I should say, Handfuls, of tragical speeches. But O grief! *Tempus edax rerum*;—what is that will last always? The sea exhaled by drops will in continuance be drie; and *Seneca*, let bloud line by line, and page by page, at length must needes die to our stage."

Not having seen the first edition of this tract till a few years ago, I formerly doubted whether the foregoing passage referred to the tragedy of *Hamlet*; but the word *Hamlets* being printed in the original copy in a different character from the rest, I have no longer any doubt upon the subject.

It is manifest from this passage that some play on the story of *Hamlet* had been exhibited before the year 1589; but I am inclined to think that it was not Shakspeare's drama, but an elder performance, on which, with the aid of the old prose History of Hamlet, his tragedy was formed. The great number of pieces which we know he formed on the performances of preceding writers⁷, renders it highly probable that some others also of his dramas were constructed on plays that are now lost. Perhaps the original *Hamlet* was written by Thomas Kyd; who was the authour of one play (and probably of more)

⁷ See the Dissertation on the Three Parts of *K. Henry VI.* Vol. VI. p. 429.

to which no name is affixed⁹. The only tragedy to which Kyd's name is affixed, (*Cornelia*,) is a professed translation from the French of Garnier, who, as well as his translator, imitated Seneca. In Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy*, as in Shakspeare's *Hamlet*, there is, if I may say so, a play represented *within a play*: if the old play of *Hamlet* should ever be recovered, a similar interlude, I make no doubt, would be found there; and somewhat of the same contrivance may be traced in *The old Taming of a Shrew*, a comedy which perhaps had the same authour as the other ancient pieces now enumerated.

Nashe seems to point at some dramatick writer of that time, who had originally been a scrivener or attorney:

“ A clerk foredoom'd his father's soul to crosse,
 “ Who penn'd a stanza when he should engrosse;”

who, instead of transcribing deeds and pleadings, chose to imitate Seneca's plays, of which a translation had been published many years before. Our authour, however freely he may have borrowed from Plutarch and Holinshed, does not appear to be at all indebted to Seneca; and therefore I do not believe that he was the person in Nashe's contemplation. The person alluded to being described as originally bred to the law, (for the trade of *noverint* is the trade of an attorney or conveyancer¹,) I formerly conceived that this circumstance also was decisive to shew that Shakspeare could not have been aimed at. I do not hesitate to acknowledge, that since the first edition of this essay I have found reason to believe that I was mistaken. The comprehensive mind of our poet embraced almost every object of nature,

⁹ *The Spanish Tragedy*.

¹ “ The country lawyers too jog down apace,

“ Each with his *noverint universi* face.”

Ravenscroft's Prologue prefixed to *Titus Andronicus*.
 Our ancient deeds were written in Latin, and frequently began with the words, *Noverint Universi*. The form is still retained. *Know all men, &c.*

every trade, every art; the manners of every description of men, and the general language of almost every profession: but his knowledge of legal terms is not merely such as might be acquired by the casual observation of even his all-comprehending mind; it has the appearance of *technical* skill; and he is so fond of displaying it on all occasions, that I suspect he was early initiated in at least the forms of law; and was employed, while he yet remained at Stratford, in the office of some country attorney, who was at the same time a petty conveyancer, and perhaps also the Seneschal of some manor-court. I shall subjoin the proofs below².

The

² — for what in me was *purchas'd*,

Falls upon thee in a much fairer sort. *King Henry IV. P. II.*

Purchase is here used in its strict legal sense, in contradistinction to an acquisition by *descent*.

Unless the devil have him in fee-simple, with fine and recovery.

Merry Wives of Windsor.

He is 'rested on the case. *Comedy of Errors.*

— with *bills* on their necks, *Be it known unto all men by these presents, &c. As you like it.*

— who writes himself armigero, in any *bill, warrant, quittance or obligation. Merry Wives of Windsor.*

Go with me to a notary, seal me there

Your *single bond. Merchant of Venice.*

Say, for non-payment, that the debt should double.

Venus and Adonis.

On a conditional bond's becoming forfeited for non-payment of money borrowed, the whole penalty, which is usually the double of the principal sum lent by the obligee, was formerly recoverable at law. To this our poet here alludes.

But the defendant doth that *plea deny*;

To 'cide his title, is impanelled

A quest of thoughts. *Sonnet 46.*

In *Much ado about Nothing* Dogberry charges the watch to keep their *fellow's counsel and their own*. This Shakspeare transferred from the oath of a grand jury-man.

And let my officers of such a nature

Make an *extent* upon his house and lands. *As you like it.*

He was taken *with the manner. Love's Labour's Lost.*

Enseef'd himself to popularity. *K. Henry IV. P. I.*

The tragedy of *Hamlet* was not registered in the books of the Stationers' Company till the 26th of July, 1602. I believe it was then published, though the earliest copy now extant is dated in 1604. In the title-page of that copy, the play is said to be "*newly imprinted, and enlarged to almost as much again as it was, according to the true and perfect copy*;" from which words it is manifest that a former *less perfect* copy had been issued from the press.

He will seal the fee-simple of his salvation, and cut the entail from all remainders, and a perpetual succession for it perpetually.

All's well that ends well.

Why, let her *except before excepted*. *Twelfth Night*.

— which is four terms, or two actions;—and he shall laugh without *intervallums*. *King Henry IV. P. II.*

— keeps leets and *law-days*. *King Richard II.*

Pray in aid for kindness. *Antony and Cleopatra.*

No writer but one who had been conversant with the technical language of leases and other conveyances, would have used *determination* as synonymous to *end*. Shakspeare frequently uses the word in that sense. See Vol. V. p. 403, n. 4.; Vol. VI. p. 84, n. *; Vol. X. p. 202, n. 8. "From and after the *determination* of such term," is the regular language of conveyancers.

Humbly complaining to your highness. *K. Richard III.*

"Humbly complaining to your lordship, your orator," &c. are the first words of every bill in chancery.

A kiss in fee-farm! In witness whereof these parties interchangeably have set their hands and seals. *Troilus and Cressida.*

Art thou a *feodary* for this act? *Cymbeline.*

See the note on that passage, Vol. VIII. p. 380, n. 2.

Are those *precepts* served? says Shallow to Davy in *K. Henry IV.*

Precepts in this sense is a word only known in the office of a Justice of peace.

Tell me, what state, what dignity, what honour,

Can'st thou *demise* to any child of mine? *K. Richard III.*

"— hath *demised*, granted; and to farm let," is the constant language of leases. What poet but Shakspeare has used the word *demised* in this sense?

Perhaps it may be said, that our authour in the same manner may be proved to have been equally conversant with the terms of divinity, or physick. Whenever as large a number of instances of his ecclesiastical or medicinal knowledge shall be produced, what has now been stated will certainly not be entitled to any weight.

In

In a tract entitled *Wits miserie or the world's madnesse, discovering the incarnate devils of the age*, by Thomas Lodge, which was published in quarto in 1596, one of the devils (as Dr. Farmer has observed) is said to be “a foule lubber, and looks as pale as the vizard of the ghost, who cried so miserably at the theatre, *Hamlet, revenge.*” If the allusion was to our authour's tragedy, this passage will ascertain its appearance in or before 1596; but Lodge may have had the elder play in his contemplation. We know however from the testimony of Dr. Gabriel Harvey, that Shakspeare's *Hamlet* had been exhibited before 1598³.

The Case is altered, a comedy, attributed to Ben Jonson, and written before the end of the year 1599⁴, contains a passage, which seems to me to have a reference to this play:

Angelo. “But first I'll play the ghost; I'll call him out⁵.”

In the second act of *Hamlet*, a contest between the children of the queen's chapel⁶, and the actors of the established theatres, is alluded to. At what time that contest began, is uncertain. But, should it appear not to have commenced till some years after the date here assigned, it would not, I apprehend, be a sufficient reason for ascribing this play to a later period; for, as

³ See Vol. X. p. 71.

⁴ This comedy was not printed till 1609, but it had appeared many years before. The time when it was written, is ascertained with great precision by the following circumstances. It contains an allusion to Meres's *Wits Treasury*, first printed in the latter end of the year 1598, (See p. 295, n. 7,) and is itself mentioned by Nashe in his *Lenten Stuff*, 4to. 1599.—“It is right of the merry cobbler's stuff, in that witty play of *The Case is Altered.*”

⁵ Jonson's works, Vol. VII. p. 362. Whalley's edit.

⁶ Between the years 1595 and 1600, some of Lily's comedies were performed by these children. Many of the plays of Jonson were represented by them between 1600 and 1609.—From a passage in *Jack Drum's Entertainment, or the Comedy of Pasquil and Catharine*, which was printed in 1601, we learn that they were much followed at that time.

additions appear to have been made to it after its first production, and we have some authority for attributing the first sketch of it to 1596, or to an earlier period, till that authority is shaken, we may presume, that any passage which is inconsistent with that date, was not in the play originally, but a subsequent insertion.

With respect to the allusion in question, it probably was an addition; for it is not found in the quarto of 1604, (which has not the appearance of a mutilated or imperfect copy,) nor did it appear in print till the publication of the folio in 1623.

The same observation may be made on the passage produced by Mr. Holt, to prove that this play was not written till after 1597. "*Their inhibition comes by means of the late innovation.*" This indeed, does appear in the quarto of 1604, but, we may presume, was added in the interval between 1597, (when the statute alluded to, 39 Eliz. ch. 4. was enacted,) and that year.

Heywood in his *Apology for Actors*, 1612, complains of the *scurrility* introduced lately among the children of Chapel, in their theatrical exhibitions. This may serve to ascertain the time when the passage which relates to them was inserted in *Hamlet*.

II. KING JOHN, 1596.

This historical play was founded on a former drama, entitled *The Troublesome Raigne of John King of England, with the Discoverie of King Richard Cordelion's base Son, vulgarly named the Bastard Fawconbridge: also the Death of King John at Swinstead Abbey. As it was (sundry times) publikely acted by the Queenes Majesties Players in the honourable Citie of London.* This piece, which is in two parts, and was printed at London for Sampson Clarke, 1591, has no authour's name in the title-page. On its republication in 1611, the bookseller for whom it was printed, inserted the letters *W. Sh.* in the title-page; and in order to conceal his fraud, omitted the words—*publikely—in the honourable Citie of London,*

London, which he was aware would proclaim this play not to be Shakspeare's *King John*; the company to which he belonged, having no *publick* theatre in *London*: that in *Blackfriars* being a private play-houſe, and the *Globe*, which was a publick theatre, being ſituated in *South-wark*. He alſo, probably with the ſame view, omitted the following lines addreſſed to the *Gentlemen Readers*, which are prefixed to the firſt edition of the old play :

“ You that with friendly grace of ſmoothed brow
 “ Have entertain’d the *Scythian Tamburlaine*,
 “ And given applauſe unto an infidel;
 “ Vouchſafe to welcome, with like curteſie,
 “ A warlike Chriſtian and your countryman.
 “ For Chriſt’s true faith indur’d he many a ſtorme,
 “ And ſet himſelfe againſt the man of *Rome*,
 “ Until baſe treaſon by a damned wight
 “ Did all his former triumphs put to flight.
 “ Accept of it, ſweete gentles, in good ſort,
 “ And thinke it was prepar’d for your diſport.”

Shakspeare’s play being then probably often acted, and the other wholly laid aſide, the word *lately* was ſubſtituted for the word *publickly*: “ — as they were ſundry times *lately* acted,” &c.

Thomas Dewe, for whom a third edition of this old play was printed in 1622, was more daring. The two parts were then publiſhed, “ as they were ſundry times *lately* acted;” and the name of *William Shakspeare* inſerted at length. By the *Queen’s Majesties* players was wiſely omitted, as not being very conſiſtent with the word *lately*, Elizabeth being then dead nineteen years.

King John is the only one of our poet’s uncontroverted plays that is not entered in the books of the Stationers’ company. It was not printed till 1623, but is mentioned by Meres in 1598, unleſs he miſtook the old play in two parts, printed in 1591, for the compoſition of Shakspeare.

It is obſervable that our authour’s ſon, Hamnet, died in Auguſt, 1596. That a man of ſuch ſenſibility, and

of so amiable a disposition, should have lost his only son, who had attained the age of twelve years, without being greatly affected by it, will not be easily credited. The pathetick lamentations which he has written for Lady Constance on the death of Arthur, may perhaps add some probability to the supposition that this tragedy was written at or soon after that period.

In the first scene of the second act the following lines are spoken by Chatillon, the French ambassador, on his return from England to King Philip :

“ And all the unsettled humours of the land—
 “ Rash, inconsiderate, fiery voluntaries,
 “ With ladies’ faces and fierce dragons’ spleens,—
 “ Have sold their fortunes at their native homes,
 “ Bearing their birth-rights proudly on their backs,
 “ To make a hazard of new fortunes here.
 “ In brief, a braver choice of dauntless spirits
 “ Than now the English bottoms have waft o’er,
 “ Did never float upon the swelling tide,
 “ To do offence and scathe to Christendom.”

Dr. Johnson has justly observed in a note on this play, that many passages in our poet’s works evidently shew that “ he often took advantage of the facts then recent and the passions then in motion.” Perhaps the description contained in the last six lines was immediately suggested to Shakspeare by the grand fleet which was sent against Spain in 1596. It consisted of eighteen of the largest of the Queen’s ships, three of the Lord Admiral’s, and above one hundred and twenty merchant-ships and victuallers, under the command of the earls of Nottingham and Essex. The regular land-forces on board amounted to ten thousand ; and there was also a large body of *voluntaries* (as they were then called) under the command of Sir Edward Winkfield. Many of the nobility went on this expedition, which was destined against Cadiz. The fleet sailed from Plymouth on the third of June 1596 ; before the end of that month the great Spanish armada was destroyed, and the town of Cadiz was sacked

sacked and burned. Here Lord Essex found 1200 pieces of ordnance, and an immense quantity of treasure, stores, ammunition, &c. valued at twenty million of ducats. The victorious commanders of this successful expedition returned to Plymouth, August 8, 1596, four days before the death of our poet's son. Many of our old historians speak of the splendor and magnificence displayed by the noble and gallant adventurers who served in this expedition; and Ben Jonson has particularly alluded to it in his *Silent Woman*, written a few years afterwards⁷. To this I suspect two lines already quoted particularly refer:

“ Have fold their fortunes at their native homes,
 “ *Bearing their birth-rights proudly on their backs.*”

Dr. Johnson conceived that the following lines in this play—

And meritorious shall that hand be call'd,
 Canoniz'd, and worshipp'd as a faint,
 That takes away by any secret course
 Thy hateful life.

might either refer to the bull published against Queen Elizabeth, or to the canonization of Garnet, Faux, and their accomplices, who in a Spanish book which he had seen, are registered as saints. If the latter allusion had been intended, then this play, or or at least this part of it, must have been written after 1605. But the passage in question is founded on a similar one in the old play, printed in 1591, and therefore no allusion to the gunpowder-plot could have been intended.

A line of *The Spanish Tragedy* is quoted in *King John*. That tragedy, I believe, had appeared in or before 1590.

In the first act of *King John*, an ancient tragedy, entitled *Solyman and Perseda*, is alluded to. The earliest

⁷ “ I had as fair a *gold jerkin* on that day as any was worn in the *Island Voyage*, or *Cadiz*, none dispraised.” *Silent Woman*, 1609.

edition of that play, now extant, is that of 1599, but it was written, and probably acted, many years before; for it was entered on the Stationers' books, by Edward Whyte, Nov. 20, 1592.

Marlton's *Insatiate Countess*, which, according to Langbaine, was printed in 1603, contains a passage, which, if it should be considered as an imitation of a similar one in *King John*, will ascertain this historical drama to have been written at least before that year:

“ Then how much more in me, whose youthful veins,
“ *Like a proud river, overflow their bounds.*”

So, in *King John*:

“ Why holds thine eye that lamentable rheum,
“ *Like a proud river peering o'er his bounds.*”

Marlton has in many other places imitated Shakspeare.

A speech spoken by the bastard in the second act of this tragedy^s seems to have been formed on one in an old play entitled *The famous History of Captain Thomas Stukely*. Captain Stukely was killed in 1578. The drama of which he is the subject, was not printed till 1605, but it is in the black letter, and, I believe, had been exhibited at least fifteen years before.

Of the only other note of time which I have observed in this tragedy, beside those already mentioned, I am unable to make any use. “ When I was in *France*,” says young Arthur,

“ Young gentlemen would be as sad as night,
“ *Only for wantonness.*”

I have not been able to ascertain when the fashion of being *sad and gentlemanlike* commenced among our gayer neighbours on the continent. A similar fashion prevailed in England, and is often alluded to by our poet, and his contemporaries. Perhaps he has in this instance attributed to the French a species of affectation then

^s See Vol. IV. p. 483.

only found in England. It is noticed by Lily in 1592, and by Ben Jonson in 1598.

12. KING RICHARD II. 1597.

King Richard II. was entered on the Stationers' books, August 29, 1597, and printed in that year.

There had been a former play on this subject, which appears to have been called *King Henry IV.* in which Richard was deposed, and killed on the stage. This piece, as Dr. Farmer and Mr. Tyrwhitt have observed, was performed on a publick theatre, at the request of Sir Gilly Merick, and some other followers of Lord Essex, the afternoon before his insurrection: "so earnest was he," (Merick) says the printed account of his arraignment, "to satisfy his eyes with a sight of that tragedy which he thought soone after his lord should bring from the stage to the state." "The players told him the play was *old*, and they should have loss by playing it, because few would come to it; but no play else would serve: and Sir Gilly Merick gave forty shillings to Philips the player to play this, besides whatsoever he could get⁹."

It may seem strange that this old play should have been represented four years after Shakspeare's drama on the same subject had been printed: the reason undoubtedly was, that in the old play the deposing King Richard II. made a part of the exhibition: but in the first edition of our authour's play, one hundred and fifty-four lines, describing a kind of trial of the king, and his actual deposition in parliament, were omitted: nor was it probably represented on the stage. Merick, Cuffe, and the rest of Essex's train, naturally preferred the play in which his *deposition* was represented, their plot not aiming at the life of the queen. It is, I know, commonly thought, that the parliament-scene, (as it is called) which was first printed in the quarto of 1608, was an

⁹ Bacon's Works, Vol. IV. 412. *St. Trials*, Vol. VIII. p. 60.

addition made by Shakspeare to his play after its first representation: but it seems to me more probable that it was written with the rest, and suppressed in the printed copy of 1597, from the fear of offending Elizabeth; against whom the Pope had published a bull in the preceding year, exhorting her subjects to take up arms against her. In 1599 Hayward published his *History of the first year of Henry IV.* which in fact is nothing more than an history of the deposing Richard II. The displeasure which that book excited at court, sufficiently accounts for the omitted lines not being inserted in the copy of this play which was published in 1602. Hayward was heavily censured in the Star-chamber, and committed to prison. At a subsequent period, (1608,) when King James was quietly and firmly settled on the throne, and the fear of internal commotion, or foreign invasion, no longer subsisted, neither the authour, the managers of the theatre, nor the bookseller, could entertain any apprehension of giving offence to the sovereign: the rejected scene was restored without scruple, and from some play-house copy probably found its way to the press.

13. KING RICHARD III. 1597.

Entered, at the Stationers' hall, Oct. 20, 1597. Printed in that year.

14. FIRST PART OF K. HENRY IV. 1597.

Entered, Feb. 25, 1597. [1597-8.] Written therefore probably in 1597, Printed in 1598.

15. SECOND PART OF K. HENRY IV. 1598.

The Second Part of King Henry IV. was entered in the Stationers' books, August 23, 1600, and was printed in that year. It was written, I believe, in 1598. From the epilogue it appears to have been composed before *K. Henry V.* which itself must have been written in or before 1599.

Meres

Meres in his *Wit's Treasury*, which was published in September 1598, has given a list of our authour's plays, and among them is *K. Henry IV.*; but as he does not describe it as a play in two parts, I doubt whether this second part had been exhibited, though it might have been then written. If it was not in his contemplation, it may be presumed to have appeared in the latter part of the year 1598. His words are these: "As Plautus and Seneca are accounted the best for comedy and tragedy, among the Latines, so Shakspeare, among the English, is the most excellent in both kinds for the stage: for comedy, witness his *Gentlemen of Verona*, his *Errors*, his *Love's Labour's Lost*, his *Love's Labour's Won*, his *Midsummer-Night's Dream*, and his *Merchant of Venice*; for tragedy, his *Richard II.* *Richard III.* *HENRY IV.* *K. John*, *Titus Andronicus*, and his *Romeo and Juliet*."²

The following allusion to one of the characters in this play, which is found in Ben Jonson's *Every Man out of his Humour*, Act V. sc. ii. first acted in 1599, is an additional authority for supposing *the Second Part of King Henry IV.* to have been written in 1598:

"Savi. What's he, gentle Mons. Brisk? Not that gentleman?

"Fast. No, lady; this is a kinsman to Justice Silence."

That this play was not written before the year 1596, is ascertained by the following allusions. In the last act Clarence, speaking of his father, says,

"The incessant care and labour of his mind

"Hath wrought the mure, that should confine it in,

"So thin, that life looks through, and will break out."

These lines appear to have been formed on the following in Daniel's *Civil Warres*, 1595, B. III. ft. 116.

¹ The circumstance of Hotspur's death in this play, and its being an historical drama, I suppose, induced Meres to denominate *the First Part of K. Henry IV.* a tragedy.

² *Wit's Treasury*, p. 282.

“ Wearing the wall so thin, that now the mind
 “ Might well look thorough, and his frailty find.”

Daniel's poem, though not published till 1595, was entered on the Stationers' books, in October 1594.

The distich, with which Pistol consoles himself, *Si fortuna me tormenta, &c.* had, I believe, appeared in an old collection of tales, and apothegms, entitled *Wits, Fits, and Fancies*, which was entered at Stationers-hall in 1595, and probably printed in that year. Sir Richard Hawkins, as Dr. Farmer has observed, “ in his voyage to the South Sea in 1593, throws out the same jingling distich on the loss of his pinnace.” But no account of that voyage was published before 1598.

In the last act of this play the young king thus addresses his brothers :

“ Brothers, you mix your sadness with some fear.
 “ This is the English, not the Turkish court ;
 “ Not Amurath an Amurath succeeds,
 “ But Harry Harry.”

It is highly probable, as is observed in a note on that passage, that Shakspeare had here in contemplation the cruelty practised by the Turkish emperor, Mahomet, who after the death of his father, Amurath the Third, in Feb. 1596³, invited his unsuspecting brothers to a feast, and caused them all to be strangled.

16. THE MERCHANT OF VENICE, 1598.

Entered at the Stationers-hall, July 22, 1598 ; and mentioned by Meres in that year. Published in 1600.

³ The affairs of this court had previously attracted the publick attention ; for in 1594 was published at London, *A Letter sent by Amurath the great Turke to Christendom.*

17. ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL, 1598.

All's well that ends well was not registered at Stationers' hall, nor printed till 1623; but has been thought to be the play mentioned by Meres in 1598, under the title of *Love's Labour's Won*. No other of our authour's plays could have borne that title with so much propriety as that before us; yet it must be acknowledged that the present title is inserted in the body of the play:

"*All's well that ends well*; still the fine's the
[crown," &c.

This line, however, might certainly have suggested the alteration of what has been thought the first title, and affords no decisive proof that this piece was originally called *All's well that ends well*. The words that compose the present title appear to have been proverbial⁴.

I formerly supposed that a comedy called *A bad beginning makes a good ending*, which was acted at court in 1613, by the Company of John Heminge, was the play now under consideration, with only a new title: but I was mistaken. The play then exhibited was written by John Ford.

In *All's well that ends well*, "The shewing of a heavenly effect in an earthly actor," is mentioned. If this should prove to be the title of some tract, (which is not improbable,) and the piece should be hereafter discovered, it may serve in some measure to ascertain the date of the play.

This comedy also contains an allusion to the dispute between the puritans and protestants concerning the use of the surplice. That dispute began in 1589; and was much agitated during all the remainder of the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

⁴ See *The Remedie of Love*, translated from Ovid, 1600, Sign. E. 3. b. "You take the old proverb with a right application for my just excuse: *All is well that ends well*; and so end I." See also Camden's *Proverbial Sentences, Remains*, 1614.

“Plutus himself,” (says one of the characters in this play,)
 “That knows the tinct and multiplying medicine,” &c.

I know not whether the pursuit of the philosopher's stone particularly engaged the publick attention at the period to which this comedy has been ascribed; and quote the passage only for the consideration of those who are more conversant with that subject.

18. KING HENRY V. 1599.

Mr. Pope thought that this historical drama was one of our authour's latest compositions; but he was evidently mistaken. *King Henry V.* was entered on the Stationers' books, August 14, 1600, and printed in the same year. It was written *after* the Second Part of *King Henry IV.* being promised in the epilogue of that play; and while the Earl of Essex was in Ireland⁵. Lord Essex went to Ireland April 15, 1599, and returned to London on the 28th of September in the same year. So that this play (unless the passage relative to him was inserted after the piece was finished,) must have been composed between April and September, 1599. Supposing that passage a subsequent insertion, the play was probably not written *long* before; for it is not mentioned by Meres in 1598.

The prologue to Ben Jonson's *Every Man in his Humour*⁶ seems clearly to allude to this play; and, if it had been written at the same time with the piece itself, might induce us, notwithstanding the silence of Meres, to place *King Henry V.* a year or two earlier; for *Every Man in his Humour* is said to have been acted in 1598. But the prologue which now appears before it, was not written till after 1601, when the play was printed without a prologue. It appears to have been Jonson's first per-

⁵ See the Chorus to the fifth act of *King Henry V.*

⁶ “He rather prays, you will be pleased to see

“One such, to-day, as other plays should be;

“Where neither Chorus wafts you o'er the seas,” &c.

Prologue to *Every Man in his Humour*. Fol. 1616.
 formance;

formance⁷; and we may presume that it was the very play, which, we are told, was brought on the stage by the good offices of Shakspeare, who himself acted in it. Malignant and envious as Jonson appears to have been; he hardly would have ridiculed his benefactor at the very time he was so essentially obliged to him. Some years afterwards his jealousy broke out, and vented itself in this prologue, which first appeared in the folio edition of Jonson's Works, published in 1616. It is certain that, not long after the year 1600, a coolness⁸

⁷ Jonson himself tells us in his Induction to *the Magnetick Lady*, that this was his first dramattick performance.—“The authour beginning his studies of this kind with *Every Man in his Humour*.”

⁸ See an old comedy called *The Return from Parnassus*: [This piece was not published till 1606; but appears to have been written in 1602, —certainly was produced before the death of Queen Elizabeth, which happened on the 24th of March 1602-3.] “Why here's our fellow Shakspeare puts them all down; ay and *Ben Jonson* too. O, that Ben Jonson is a pestilent fellow; he brought up Horace giving the poets a pill, but our fellow Shakspeare hath given him a purge that made him bewray his credit.”

The play of Jonson's in which *he gave the poets a pill*, is the *Poetaster*, acted in 1601. In that piece some passages of *King Henry V.* are ridiculed. In what manner Shakspeare put him down, or made him bewray his credit, does not appear. His retaliation, we may be well assured, contained no gross or illiberal abuse; and, perhaps, did not go beyond a ballad or an epigram, which may have perished with things of greater consequence. He has, however, marked his disregard for the calumniator of his fame, by not leaving him any memorial by his Will.—In an apologetical dialogue which Jonson annexed to the *Poetaster*, he says, he had been provoked for three years (i. e. from 1598 to 1601) on every stage by slanderers; as for the players, he says,

“———— It is true, I tax'd them,
 “ And yet but some, and those so sparingly,
 “ As all the rest might have sat still unquestion'd:—
 “———— What they have done against me
 “ I am not mov'd with. If it gave them meat,
 “ Or got them cloaths, 'tis well; that was their end.
 “ Only, amongst them, I am sorry for
 “ Some better natures, by the rest drawn in
 “ To run in that vile line.”

By the words “*Some better natures;*” there can, I think, be little doubt that Shakspeare was alluded to.

arose between Shakspeare and him, which, however he may talk of his almost idolatrous affection, produced on his part, from that time to the death of our authour, and for many years afterwards, much clumsy sarcasm, and many malevolent reflections⁹.

On

⁹ In his *Silent Woman*, 1609, Act V. sc. ii. Jonson perhaps pointed at Shakspeare, as one whom he *viewed with scornful, yet with jealous, eyes* :

“ So, they may censure poets and authors, and compare them; Daniel with Spenser, Jonson with *t’other youth*, and so forth.” Decker, however, might have been meant.

Again, in the same play :

“ You two shall be the *chorus* behind the arras, and whip out between the acts, and speak.”

In the Induction to *Bartholomew Fair*, which was acted in 1614, two years before the death of our authour, three of his plays, and in the piece itself two others, are attempted to be ridiculed.

In *The Devil’s an Ass*, acted in 1616, all his historical plays are obliquely censured.

Meer-er. “ By my faith you are cunning in the chronicles.

Fitz-dot. “ No, I confess, I ha’t from the play-books, and think they are more authentick.”

They are again attacked in the Induction to *Bartholomew Fair* :

“ An some writer that I know, had but the penning o’ this matter, he would ha’ made you such a *jig-a-jog i’ the booths*, you should ha’ thought an *earthquake* had been in the fair. But these *master-poets*, they will ha’ their own absurd courses, they will be informed of nothing.”

The following passage in *Cynthia’s Revels*, 1601, was, I think, likewise pointed against Shakspeare :

“ Besides, they would wish your poets would leave to be promoters of other men’s jests, and to way-lay all the stale apothegms or *old books* they can hear of, in print or otherwise, to farce their scenes withal :— Again, that feeding their friends with nothing of their own, but what they have *twice* or *thrice cooked*, they should not wantonly give out how soon they had *dress’d* it, nor how many coaches came to carry away the broken meat, besides hobby-horses and foot-cloth nags.”

Jonson’s plots were all his own invention ; our authour’s chiefly taken from preceding plays or novels. The former employed a year or two in composing a play ; the latter probably produced two every year, while he remained in the theatre.

The Induction to *The Staple of News*, which appeared in 1625, not very long after the publication of our authour’s plays in folio, contains a sneer at a passage in *Julius Cæsar* :

“ Know

On this play Mr. Pope has the following note, Act I.
sc. i.

“ This first scene was added since the edition of 1608,

“ Know, Cæsar doth not wrong ; nor without cause

“ Will he be satisfied.”

which for the purpose of ridicule is quoted unfaithfully ; and in the same play may be found an effort, as impotent as that of Voltaire *, to raise a laugh at Hamlet's exclamation when he kills Polonius.

Some other passages which are found in Jonson's works, might be mentioned in support of this observation, but being quoted hereafter for other purposes, they are here omitted.

Notwithstanding these proofs, Jonson's malevolence to Shakspeare, and jealousy of his superior reputation, have been doubted by Mr. Pope and others ; and much stress has been laid on a passage in his *Discoveries*, and on the commendatory verses prefixed to the first edition of our authour's plays in folio.—The reader, after having perused the following character of Jonson, drawn by Mr. Drummond of Hawthornden, a contemporary, and an intimate acquaintance of his, will not, perhaps, readily believe these *posthumous* encomiums to have been sincere. “ Ben Jonson,” says that writer, “ was a great lover and praiser of himself ; a contemner and scorner of others ; given rather to lose a friend than a jest ; jealous of every word and action of those about him, especially after drink, which is one of the elements in which he lived ; a dissembler of the parts which reign in him ; a bragger of some good that he wanted : thinketh nothing well done, but what either he himself or some of his friends have said or done ; he is passionately kind and angry ; careless either to gain or keep ; vindictive, but, if he be well answered, [angry] at himself ; interprets best sayings and deeds often to the worst †. He was for any religion, as being versed in both ; oppressed with fancy, which over-mastered his reason, a general disease in many poets. His inventions are smooth and easy, but above all, he excelleth in translation.” *Drummond's Works*, fol. 1711 ; p. 226.

In the year 1619 Jonson went to Scotland, to visit Mr. Drummond, who has left a curious account of a conversation that passed between them, relative to the principal poets of those times.

* “ Ah ! ma mere, s'écrie-t-il, il y a un gros rat derrière la tapisserie ;—il tire son épée, court au rat, et tue le bon homme Polonius.” *Oeuvres de Voltaire*, Tome XV. p. 473. 4to.

† His misquoting a line of *Julius Cæsar*, so as to render it nonsense, at a time when the play was in print, is a strong illustration of this part of his character. The plea of an unfaithful memory cannot be urged in his defence, for he tells us in his *Discoveries*, that till he was past forty, he could repeat every thing that he had written.

which is much short of the present editions, wherein the speeches are generally enlarged, and raised; several whole scenes besides, and the choruses also, were since added by *Shakespeare*."

Dr. Warburton also positively asserts that this first scene was written after the accession of K. James I. and the subsequent editors agree, that several additions were made by the authour to *King Henry V.* after it was originally composed. But there is, I believe, no good ground for these assertions. It is true that no perfect edition of this play was published before that in folio, in 1623; but it does not follow from thence, that the scenes which then first appeared in print, and all the choruses, were added by *Shakespeare*, as Mr. Pope supposes, after 1608. We know indeed the contrary to be true; for the chorus to the fifth act must have been written in 1599.

The fair inference to be drawn from the imperfect and mutilated copies of this play, published in 1600, 1602, and 1608, is, not that the whole play, as we now have it, did not then exist, but that those copies were surreptitious; and that the editor in 1600, not being able to publish the whole, published what he could.

I have not indeed met with any evidence (except in three plays) that the several scenes which are found in the folio of 1623, and are not in the preceding quartos, were added by the second labour of the authour.—The last chorus of *King Henry V.* already mentioned, affords a striking proof that this was not always the case. The two copies of *the Second Part of King Henry IV.* printed in the same year, (1600) furnish another. In one of these, the whole first scene of Act III. is wanting; not because it was then unwritten, (for it is found in the other copy published in that year,) but because the editor was not possessed of it. That what have been called additions by the authour, were not really such, may be also collected from another circumstance; that in some of the quartos where these supposed additions are wanting,

ing, references and replies are found to the passages omitted¹.

I do not however mean to say, that Shakspeare never made any alterations in his plays. We have reason to believe that *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hamlet*, and *the Merry Wives of Windsor*, were revised and augmented by the authour; and a second revisal or temporary topicks might have suggested, in a course of years, some additions and alterations in some other of his pieces. But with respect to the entire scenes that are wanting in some of the early editions, (particularly those of *King Henry V.* *King Richard II.* and *the Second Part of King Henry IV.*) I suppose the omissions to have arisen from the imperfection of the copies; and instead of saying that “the first scene of *King Henry V.* was added by the authour after the publication of the quarto in 1600,” all that we can pronounce with certainty is, that this scene is not found in the quarto of 1600.

19. MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING, 1600.

Much Ado about Nothing was written, we may presume, early in the year 1600; for it was entered at Stationers' hall, August 23, 1600, and printed in that year.

It is not mentioned by Meres in his list of our authour's plays, published in the latter end of the year 1598.

20. AS YOU LIKE IT, 1600.

This comedy was not printed till 1623, and the caveat or memorandum² in the second volume of the books of

¹ Of this see a remarkable instance in *K. Henry IV. P. II. Act I. sc. i.* where Morton in a long speech having informed Northumberland that the archbishop of York had joined the rebel party, the earl replies,—“*I knew of this before.*” The quarto contains the reply, but not a single line of the narrative to which it relates.

² See Mr. Steevens's extracts from the books of the Stationers' company, ante, p. 253.

the Stationers' company, relative to the three plays of *As you like it*, *Henry V.* and *Much ado about Nothing*, has no date except Aug. 4. But immediately above that caveat there is an entry, dated May 27, 1600,—and the entry immediately following it, is dated Jan. 23, 1603. We may therefore presume that this caveat was entered between those two periods: more especially, as the dates scattered over the pages where this entry is found, are, except in one instance, in a regular series from 1596 to 1615. This will appear more clearly by exhibiting the entry exactly as it stands in the book:

27 May 1600.

To Mr. Roberts,] Allarum to London.

4 Aug.

As you like it, a book.

Henry the Fifth, a book.

Every Man in his Humour, a book.

Comedy of Much Ado about Nothing.

} to be staied.

23 Jan. 1603.

To Thomas Thorpe,
and William Aspley.

} This to be their copy, &c.

It is extremely probable that this 4th of August was of the year 1600; which standing a little higher on the paper, the clerk of the Stationers' company might have thought unnecessary to be repeated. All the plays which were entered with *As you like it*, and are here said to be *staied*, were printed in the year 1600 or 1601. The stay or injunction against the printing appears to have been very speedily taken off; for in ten days afterwards, on the 14th of August, 1600, *King Henry V.* was entered, and published in the same year. So, *Much ado about Nothing* was entered August 23, 1600, and printed also in that year: and *Every Man in his Humour* was published in 1601.

Shakspeare,

Shakspeare, it is said, played the part of Adam in *As you like it*. As he was not eminent on the stage, it is probable that he ceased to act some years before he retired to the country. His appearance, however, in this comedy, is not inconsistent with the date here assigned; for we know that he performed a part in Jonson's *Sejanus* in 1603.

A passage in this comedy furnishes an additional proof of its not having been written before the year 1596, nor after the year 1603. "I will weep for nothing," says Rosalind, "like *Diana in the fountain*." Stowe in his *Survey of London*, 1598, informs us, that in the year 1596 at the east side of the Cross in Cheapside was set up "a curious wrought tabernacle of gray marble, and in the same an alabaster image of *Diana*, and water conveyed from the Thames, prilling from her naked breast." To this the passage above cited certainly alludes. In his second edition of the same work, printed in 1603, he informs the reader, that the water flowed in this manner *for a time*, but that the statue was then *decayed*. It was, we see, in order in 1598, and continued so without doubt for two years afterwards, that is, till 1600, when *As you like it* appears to have been written.

In this comedy a line of Marlowe's *Hero and Leander* is quoted. That poem was published in 1598, and probably before.

21. MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR, 1601.

The following line in the earliest edition of this comedy,

"Sail like my pinnace to those *golden shores*,"

shews that it was written after Sir Walter Raleigh's return from Guiana in 1596.

The first sketch of *The Merry Wives of Windsor* was printed in 1602. It was entered in the books of the Stationers' company, on the 18th of January 1601-2, and was therefore probably written in 1601, after the *two parts of King Henry IV.*, being, it is said, composed

at the desire of queen Elizabeth, in order to exhibit Falstaff in love, when all the pleasantries which he could afford in any other situation was exhausted. But it may not be thought so clear, that it was written after *King Henry V.* Nym and Bardolph are both hanged in *King Henry V.* yet appear in *The Merry Wives of Windsor.* Falstaff is disgraced in the *Second Part of King Henry IV.* and dies in *King Henry V.*; but in the *Merry Wives of Windsor* he talks as if he were yet in favour at court; “*If it should come to the ear of the court how I have been transformed, &c.*” and Mr. Page discountenances Fenton’s addresses to his daughter, *because he kept company with the wild prince and with Pointz.* These circumstances seem to favour the supposition that this play was written between the *First and Second Parts of K. Henry IV.* But that it was not written then, may be collected from the tradition above mentioned. The truth, I believe, is, that though it ought to be read (as Dr. Johnson has observed,) between the *Second Part of King Henry IV.* and *King Henry V.*, it was written *after King Henry V.* and after Shakspeare had killed Falstaff. In obedience to the royal commands, having revived him, he found it necessary at the same time to revive all those persons with whom he was wont to be exhibited; Nym, Pistol, Bardolph, and the Page: and disposed of them as he found it convenient, without a strict regard to their situations or catastrophes in former plays.

There is reason to believe that *The Merry Wives of Windsor* was revised and enlarged by the authour, after its first production. The old edition in 1602, like that of *Romeo and Juliet*, is apparently a rough draught, and not a mutilated or imperfect copy. The precise time when the alterations and additions were made, has not been ascertained: however, some passages in the enlarged copy may assist us in our conjectures on the subject.

Falstaff’s address to Justice Shallow in the first scene shews that the alterations were made after King James came to the throne: “Now, Master Shallow, you’ll complain of me to the king.” In the first copy the words are, “*to the council.*”

When

When Mrs. Page observes to Mrs. Ford, that "these knights will hack," which words are not in the original copy, Shakspeare, it has been thought, meant to convey a covert sneer at King James's prodigality in bestowing knighthood in the beginning of his reign. Between the king's arrival at Berwick and the 2d of May, 1603, he made 237 knights; and in the following July near four hundred.

"The best courtier of them all," says Mrs. Quickly, "when *the court lay at Windsor*, could never have brought her to such a canary. Yet there have been knights, and lords, and gentlemen, with their coaches, I warrant you, coach after coach," &c.

The court went to Windsor in the beginning of July, 1603, and soon afterwards the feast of Saint George was celebrated there with great solemnity. The Prince of Wales, the duke of Lenox, our poet's great patron the earl of Southampton, the earl of Pembroke, and the earl of Marre, were installed knights of the garter; and the chief ladies of England did homage to the queen. The king and queen afterwards usually resided in the summer at Greenwich. The allusion to the insignia of the order of the garter in the fifth act of this comedy, if written recently after so splendid a solemnity, would have a peculiar grace; yet the order having been originally instituted at Windsor by King Edward III., the place in which the scene lay, might, it must be owned, have suggested an allusion to it, without any particular or temporary object.—It is observable that Mrs. Quickly says, there had been knights, lords, and gentlemen, with their coaches, *coach after coach*, &c. Coaches, as appears from Howes's Continuation of Stowe's Chronicle, did not come into general use, till the year 1605. It may therefore be presumed that this play was not enlarged very long before that year.

There is yet another note of time to be considered. In the first scene of the enlarged copy of the *Merry Wives of Windsor*, Slender asks Mr. Page, "How does your fallow grey-hound, sir? I hear he was out run on Cotfale."

He

He means the Cotswold hills in Gloucestershire. In the beginning of the reign of James the First, the Cotswold games were instituted by one Dover. They consisted, as Mr. Warton has observed, "of wrestling, leaping, pitching the bar, handling the pike, dancing of women, various kinds of hunting, and particularly coursing the hare with greyhounds." Mr. Warton is of opinion that two or three years must have elapsed before these games could have been effectually established, and therefore supposes that our authour's additions to this comedy were made about the year 1607. Dr. Farmer doubts whether Capt. Dover was the founder of these games. "Though the Captain," he observes, "be celebrated in the *Annalia Dubrensia* as the founder of them, he might be the *reviver* only, or some way contribute to make them more famous; for in the second part of *King Henry IV.* Justice Shallow reckons among the *swinge-bucklers*, "Will Squeele, a *Cotsole* man." In confirmation of Dr. Farmer's opinion Mr. Steevens remarks, that in Randolph's poems, 1638, is found "An eclogue on the noble assemblies *revived* on Cotswold hills by Mr. Robert Dover."

If the Cotswold games were celebrated before the death of Queen Elizabeth, the passage above cited certainly proves nothing. Let us then endeavour to ascertain that fact. Dover himself tells us in the *Annalia Dubrensia* that he was the *founder* of these games:

"Yet I was bold for better recreation

"To *invent* these sports, to counter-check that fashion."

and from Ben Jonson's verses in the same collection we learn that they were exhibited in the time of James I. and revived in 1636. Nothing more then follows from Randolph's verses, compared with Jonson's, than that the games had been discontinued after their first institution by Dover, (probably soon after the death of King James) and were *revived* by their *founder* at a subsequent period. Cotswold, long before the death of Elizabeth, might have been famous for swinge-bucklers,

or in other words for strong men, skilled in fighting with sword and buckler, wrestling, and other athletic exercises: but there is no ground for supposing that coursing with greyhounds, in order to obtain the prize of a silver collar, was customary there, till Dover instituted those prizes after the accession of James to the throne.

This comedy was not printed in its present state till 1623, when it was published with the rest of our author's plays in folio. The re-publication of the imperfect copy in 1619 has been mentioned as a circumstance from which we may infer that Shakspere's improved play was not written, or at least not acted, till some years after 1607. I confess, I do not perceive, on what ground this inference is made. Arthur Johnson, the bookseller for whom the imperfect copy of this play was published in 1602, when the whole edition was sold off, reprinted it in 1619, knowing that the enlarged copy remained in Ms. in the hands of the proprietors of the Globe Theatre, and that such of the publick as wished to read the play in any form, must read the imperfect play, of which he had secured the property by entering it at Stationers' hall. In the same manner Thomas Pavier in 1619 reprinted the first and second parts of *The whole Contention of the two houses of Yorke and Lancaster*, though he could not but know that the *Second and Third Parts of King Henry VI.* which were formed on those pieces, and were much more valuable than them, had been frequently acted, antecedent to his re-publication, and that the original plays had long been withdrawn from the scene. Not being able to procure the improved and perfect copies, a needy bookseller would publish what he could.

22. KING HENRY VIII. 1601.

This play was probably written, as Dr. Johnson and Mr. Steevens observe, before the death of queen Elizabeth, which happened on the 24th of March, 1602-3. The elogium on king James, which is blended with the panegyrick

panegyrick on Elizabeth, in the last scene, was evidently a subsequent insertion, after the accession of the Scottish monarch to the throne: for Shakspeare was too well acquainted with courts, to compliment in the life-time of queen Elizabeth, her presumptive successor, of whom history informs us she was not a little jealous. That the prediction concerning king James was added after the death of the queen, is still more clearly evinced, as Dr. Johnson has remarked, by the aukward manner in which it is connected with the foregoing and subsequent lines.

The following lines in that prediction may serve to ascertain the time when the compliment was introduced:

“ Wherever the bright sun of heaven shall shine,
 “ His honour and the greatness of his name
 “ Shall be, and make new nations.”

Though Virginia was discovered in 1584, the first colony sent out went there in 1606. In that year the king granted two letters patent for planting that country, one to the city of London, the other to the cities of Bristol, Exeter and Plymouth. The colony sent from London settled in Virginia; that from the other cities in New England; the capital of which was built in the following year, and called *James-town*. In 1606 also a scheme was adopted for the plantation of Ulster in Ireland³. I suspect therefore that the panegyrick on the king was introduced either in that year, or in 1612, when a lottery was granted expressly for the establishment of English Colonies in Virginia.

It may be objected, that if this play was written after the accession of king James, the authour could not introduce a panegyrick on him, without making queen Elizabeth the vehicle of it, she being the object immediately presented to the audience in the last act of *King Henry VIII.*; and that, therefore, the praises so profusely lavished on her, do *not* prove this play to have been written in her life-time; on the contrary, that the concluding lines of her character seem to imply that she was dead, when it was composed. The objection certainly

³ Bacon's Works, Vol. IV. p. 440.

has weight; but, I apprehend, the following observations afford a sufficient answer to it.

1. It is more likely that Shakspeare should have written a play, the chief subject of which is, the disgrace of queen Catharine, the aggrandizement of Anne Boleyn, and the birth of her daughter, in the life-time of that daughter, than after her death: at a time when the subject must have been highly pleasing at court, rather than at a period when it must have been less interesting.

Queen Catharine, it is true, is represented as an amiable character, but still she is *eclipsed*; and the greater her merit, the higher was the compliment to the mother of Elizabeth, to whose superior beauty she was obliged to give way.

2. If *King Henry VIII.* had been written in the time of king James I. the authour, instead of expatiating so largely in the last scene, in praise of the queen, which he could not think would be acceptable to her successor, who hated her memory*, would probably have made him the principal figure in the prophecy, and thrown her into the back-ground as much as possible.

3. Were James I. Shakspeare's chief object in the original construction of the last act of this play, he would probably have given a very short character of Elizabeth, and have *dwelt* on that of James, with whose praise he would have *concluded*, in order to make the stronger impression on the audience, instead of returning again to queen Elizabeth, in a very awkward and abrupt manner, after her character seemed to be quite finished: an awkwardness that can only be accounted for, by supposing the panegyrick on king James an after-production⁴.

4. If

* King James on his accession to the throne studiously marked his disregard for Elizabeth by the favour which he shewed to Lord Southampton, and to every other person who had been disgraced by her. Of this Shakspeare could not be ignorant.

4 After having enumerated some of the blessings which were to ensue from the birth of Elizabeth, and celebrated her majesty's various virtues, the poet thus proceeds:

" *Crân.* In her days every man shall eat in safety
" Under his own vine, what he plants, and sing

" The

4. If the queen had been dead when our authour wrote this play, he would have been acquainted with the particular circumstances attending her death, the situation of the kingdom at that time, and of foreign states, &c. and as archbishop Cranmer is supposed to have had the gift of prophecy, Shakspeare, probably, would have made him mention some of those circumstances. Whereas the prediction, as it stands at present, is quite general, and such as might, without any hazard of error, have been pronounced in the life-time of her majesty; for the principal facts that it foretells, are, that she should die aged, and a virgin. Of the former, supposing this piece to have been written in 1601, the authour was sufficiently secure; for she was then near seventy years old. The latter may perhaps be thought too delicate a subject, to have been mentioned while she was yet living. But we may presume, it was far from being an ungrateful topick; for very early after her accession to the throne, she appears to have been proud of her maiden character; declaring that she was *wedded* to her people, and that she desired no other inscription on her tomb, than—

- “ The merry songs of peace to all his neighbours.
 “ God shall be truly known; and those about her
 “ From her shall read the perfect ways of honour,
 “ And by those claim their greatness, not by blood.
 “ [Nor shall this peace *sleep* with her; but as when
 “ The bird of wonder *dies*, the maiden phœnix,
 “ Her ashes new-create another heir,
 “ As great in admiration as herself;
 “ So shall she leave her blessedness to one, &c.
 “ ————— He shall flourish,
 “ And, like a mountain cedar, reach his branches
 “ To all the plains about him:—our children’s children
 “ Shall see this, and bless heaven.
 “ *King.* Thou speakest wonders.]
 “ *Cran.* She shall be, to the happiness of England,
 “ An aged princess; many days shall see her
 “ And yet no day without a deed to crown it.
 “ Would I had known no more! but she must *die*,
 “ She must, the saints must have her; yet a virgin,” &c.

The lines between crotchets, are those, supposed to have been inserted by the authour after the accession of king James.

Here

*Here lyeth Elizabeth, who reigned and died a virgin*⁵. Besides, if Shakspeare knew, as probably most people at that time did, that she became very solicitous about the reputation of virginity, when her title to it was at least equivocal, this would be an additional inducement to him to compliment her on that head.

5. Granting that the *latter part* of the panegyrick on Elizabeth implies that she was dead when it was composed, it would not prove that this play was written in the time of king James; for *these latter lines* in praise of the queen, as well as the whole of the compliment to the king, might have been added after his accession to the throne, in order to bring the speaker back to the object immediately before him, the infant Elizabeth. And this Mr. Theobald conjectured to have been the case. I do not, however, see any *necessity* for this supposition; as there is nothing, in my apprehension, contained in *any* of the lines in praise of the queen, inconsistent with the notion of the *whole* of the panegyrick on her having been composed in her life-time.

In further confirmation of what has been here advanced to shew that this play was probably written while queen Elizabeth was yet alive, it may be observed, (to use the words of an anonymous writer,⁶) that “Shakspeare has cast the disagreeable parts of her *father's* character as much into shade as possible; that he has represented him as greatly displeased with the grievances of his subjects, and ordering them to be relieved; tender and obliging [in the early part of the play] to his queen, grateful to the cardinal, and in the case of Cranmer, capable of distinguishing and rewarding true merit.” “He has exerted (adds the same authour) an equal degree of complaisance, by the amiable lights in which he has shewn the *mother* of Elizabeth. Anne Bullen is represented as affected with the most tender concern for the sufferings of her mistress, queen Catharine; receiving the honour the

⁵ Camden, 27. Melvil, 49.

⁶ The authour of *Shakspeare Illustrated*.

king confers on her, by making her marchioness of Pembroke, with a graceful humility; and more anxious to conceal her advancement from the queen, lest it should aggravate her sorrows, than solicitous to penetrate into the meaning of so extraordinary a favour, or of indulging herself in the flattering prospect of future royalty."

It is unnecessary to quote particular passages in support of these assertions; but the following lines, which are spoken of Anne Boleyn by the Lord Chamberlain, appear to me so evidently calculated for the ear of Elizabeth, (to whom such incense was by no means displeasing,) that I cannot forbear to transcribe them:

" She is a gallant creature, and complete
 " In mind and feature. I persuade me, *from her*
 " *Will fall some blessing to this land, which shall*
 " *In it be memoriz'd.*"

Again:

" — I have perused her well;
 " Beauty and honour are in her so mingled,
 " That they have caught the king: *and who knows yet,*
 " *But from this lady may proceed a gem,*
 " *To lighten all this isle.*"

Our authour had produced so many plays in the preceding years, that it is not likely that *King Henry VIII.* was written *before* 1601. It might perhaps with equal propriety be ascribed to 1602, and it is not easy to determine in which of those years it was composed; but it is extremely probable that it was written in one of them. It was not printed till 1623.

A poem, called the Life and Death of Thomas Wolsey, Cardinal, which was entered on the books of the Stationers' company, and published, in the year 1599, perhaps suggested this subject to Shakspeare.

He had also certainly read Churchyard's *Legend of Cardinal Wolsey*, printed in *The Mirrour for Magistrates*, 1587.

" Have

“Have we some strange Indian with the great tool come to court, the women so besiege us,” says the Porter in the last act of this play. This note of time may perhaps hereafter serve to ascertain the date of this piece, though I cannot avail myself of it, not having been able to discover to what circumstance Shakspeare here alludes.

A play entitled *The Life and Death of Lord Cromwell*, was published at London in 1602. In the title-page it is said to be written by W. S.; letters which undoubtedly were inserted to deceive the reader, and to induce him to suppose that the piece was written by Shakspeare, as a kind of sequel to his *Henry VIII.* This circumstance may serve in some measure to confirm my conjecture that *King Henry VIII.* had been exhibited in the preceding year. Rowley's *King Henry VIII.* was published in 1605, probably with a view that it also might be confounded with Shakspeare's drama; and both it and *Lord Cromwell* were re-printed with the same fraudulent intention in 1613, in which year our authour's play was revived with great splendour.

The Globe play-house, we are told by the continuator of Stowe's Chronicle, was burnt down, on St. Peter's day, in the year 1613, while the play of *K. Henry VIII.* was exhibiting. Sir Henry Wotton, (as Mr. Tyrwhitt has observed,) says in one of his letters, that this accident happened during the exhibition of a *new* play, called *All is True*; which, however, appears both from Sir Henry's minute description of the piece, and from the account given by Stowe's continuator, to have been our authour's play of *K. Henry VIII.* If indeed Sir H. Wotton was accurate in calling it a *new* play, all the foregoing reasoning on this subject would be at once overthrown; and this piece, instead of being ascribed to 1601, should have been placed twelve years later. But I strongly suspect that the only novelty attending this play, in the year 1613, was its title, decorations, and perhaps the prologue and epilogue. The Elector Palatine was in London in that year; and it appears from the Ms. register of

lord Harrington, treasurer of the chambers to K. James I. that many of our authour's plays were then exhibited for the entertainment of him and the princess Elizabeth. By the same register we learn, that the titles of many of them were changed⁷ in that year. Princes are fond of opportunities to display their magnificence before strangers of distinction; and James, who on his arrival here must have been dazzled by a splendour foreign to the poverty of his native kingdom, might have been peculiarly ambitious to exhibit before his son-in-law the mimic pomp of an English coronation⁸. *K. Henry VIII.* therefore, after having lain by for some years unacted, on account of the costliness of the exhibition, might have been revived in 1613, under the title of *All is True*, with new decorations, and a new prologue and epilogue. Mr. Tyrwhitt observes, that the prologue has two or three direct references to this title; a circumstance which authorizes us to conclude, almost with certainty, that it was an occasional production, written some years after the composition of the play. *King Henry VIII.* not being then printed, the fallacy of calling it a new play on its revival was not easily detected.

Dr. Johnson long since suspected, from the contemptuous manner in which "*the noise of targets, and the fellow in a long motley coat,*" or, in other words, most of our authour's plays, are spoken of, in this prologue, that it was not the composition of Shakspeare, but written after his departure from the stage, on some accidental revival

⁷ Thus, *Henry IV. P. I.* was called *Hotspur*; *Henry IV. P. II.* or *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, was exhibited under the name of *Sir John Falstaff*; *Much ado about Nothing* was new-named *Benedick and Beatrice*, and *Julius Cæsar* seems to have been represented under the title of *Cæsar's Tragedy*.

⁸ The Prince Palatine was not present at the representation of *K. Henry VIII.* on the 30th of June O. S. when the Globe play-house was burnt down, having left England some time before. But the play might have been revived for his entertainment in the beginning of the year 1613; and might have been occasionally represented afterwards.

of *King Henry VIII.* by Ben Jonson, whose style, it seemed to him to resemble⁹. Dr. Farmer is of the same opinion,

⁹ In support of this conjecture it may be observed, that Ben Jonson has in many places endeavoured to ridicule our authour for representing battles on the stage. So, in his prologue to *Every Man in his Humour*:

“——Yet ours, for want, hath not so lov'd the stage,

“As he dare serve the *ill customs* of the age;

“Or purchase your delight at such a rate,¹

“As, for it, he himself must justly hate;

“To make, &c.

“——or with three rusty swords,

“And help of some few foot-and-half-foot words,

“Fight over York and Lancaster's long jars,

“And in the tiring house bring wounds to scars.”

Again, in his *Silent Woman*, Act IV. sc. iv.

“Nay, I would fit out a play, that were nothing but fights at sea, drum, trumpet, and target.”

We are told in the memoirs of Ben Jonson's life, that he went to France in the year 1613. But at the time of the revival of *King Henry VIII.* he either had not left England, or was then returned; for he was a spectator of the fire which happened at the Globe theatre during the representation of that piece. [See the next note.]

It may, perhaps, seem extraordinary, that he should have presumed to prefix this covert censure of Shakspeare to one of his own plays. But he appears to have eagerly embraced every opportunity of depreciating him. This occasional prologue (whoever was the writer of it) confirms the tradition handed down by Rowe, that our authour retired from the stage some years before his death. Had he been at that time joined with Heminge and Burbage in the management of the Globe theatre, he scarcely would have suffered the lines above alluded to, to have been spoken. In lord Harrington's account of the money disbursed for the plays that were exhibited by his majesty's servants, in the year 1613, before the Elector Palatine, all the payments are said to have been made to “*John Heminge*, for himself and the rest of his fellows;” from which we may conclude that he was then the principal manager. A correspondent, however, of Sir Thomas Puckering's, (as I learn from Mr. Tyrwhitt) in a Ms. letter, preserved in the Museum, and dated in the year 1613, calls the company at the Globe, “*Bourbage's company*.”—Shakspeare's name stands before either of these, in the licence granted by K. James; and had he not left London before that time, the players at the Globe theatre, I imagine, would rather have been entitled, *his company*.—The burlesque parody on the account of Falstaff's death, which is contained in Fletcher's comedy of *the Captain*, acted in 1613, and the ridicule of Hamlet's celebrated

opinion, and thinks he sees something of Jonson's hand, here and there, in the dialogue also. After our authour's retirement to the country, Jonson was perhaps employed to give a novelty to the piece by a new title and prologue, and to furnish the managers of the Globe with a description of the coronation ceremony, and of those other decorations, with which, from his connection with Inigo Jones, and his attendance at court, he was peculiarly conversant.

The piece appears to have been revived with some degree of splendour; for Sir Henry Wotton gives a very pompous account of the representation. The unlucky accident that happened to the house during the exhibition, was occasioned by discharging some small pieces, called chambers, on King Henry's arrival at cardinal Wolsey's gate at Whitehall, one of which, being injudiciously managed, set fire to the thatched roof of the theatre¹.

The

soliloquy, and of Ophelia's death, in his *Scornful Lady*, which was represented about the same time, confirm the tradition that our authour had then retired from the stage, careless of the fate of his writings, inattentive to the illiberal attacks of his contemporaries, and negligent alike of present and posthumous fame.

Since the above note was written, I have seen the mortgage which is printed in a preceding page, and was executed by Shakspeare in March 1612-13. From this deed we find that he was in London in that year: he might, however, have parted with his property in the theatre before.

¹ The Globe theatre (as I learn from the Mss. of Mr. Oldys) was thatched with reeds, and had an open area in its center. This area we may suppose to have been filled by the lowest part of the audience, whom Shakspeare calls the *groundlings*.—*Chambers* are not, like other guns, pointed horizontally, but are discharged as they stand erect on their breeches. The accident may, therefore, be easily accounted for. If these pieces were let off behind the scenes, the paper or wadding with which their charges were confined, would reach the thatch on the inside; or if fixed without the walls, it might have been carried by the wind to the top of the roof.

This accident is alluded to, in the following lines of Ben Jonson's *Execration upon Vulcan*, from which it appears, that he was at the Globe playhouse when it was burnt; a circumstance which in some measure strengthens the conjecture that he was employed on the revival
of

The play, thus revived and new-named, was probably called, in the bills of that time, a *new* play; which might have led Sir Henry Wotton to describe it as such. And thus his account may be reconciled with that of the other contemporary writers, as well as with those arguments which have been here urged in support of the early date of *King Henry VIII.* Every thing has been fully stated on each side of the question. The reader must judge.

Mr. Roderick in his notes on our authour, (appended to Mr. Edwards's *Canons of Criticism*,) takes notice of some peculiarities in the metre of the play before us; viz. "*that there are many more verses in it than in any other, which end with a redundant syllable*,"—"very near two to one,"—and that "*the cæsuræ or pauses of the*

of *King Henry VIII.* for this was not the theatre at which his pieces were usually represented:

"Well fare the wise men yet on the Bank-side,
 "My friends, the watermen! they could provide
 "Against thy fury, when, to serve their need,
 "They made a Vulcan of a sheaf of reeds;
 "Whom they durst handle in their holy-day coats,
 "And safely trust to dress, not burn, their boats.
 "But O those reeds! thy mere disdain of them
 "Made thee beget that cruel stratagem,
 "(Which some are pleas'd to style but thy mad prank,)
 "Against *the Globe*, the glory of *the Bank*:
 "Which, though it were the fort of the whole parish,
 "Flank'd with a ditch, and forc'd out of a marish,
 "*I saw* with two poor *chambers* taken in,
 "And raz'd; ere thought could urge this might have been.
 "See the world's ruins! nothing but the piles
 "Left, and wit since to cover it with tiles.
 "The breth'ren, they straight nois'd it out for news,
 "'Twas verily some relick of the stewes,
 "And this a sparkle of that fire let loose,
 "That was lock'd up in the Winchestrian goose,
 "Bred on *the Bank* in time of popery,
 "When Venus there maintain'd her mystery.
 "But others fell, with that conceit, by the ears,
 "And cried, it was a threat'ning to the bears,
 "And that accursed ground, *the Paris-garden*," &c.

verse are full as remarkable." The redundancy, &c., observed by this critick, Mr. Steevens thinks (a remark, which, having omitted to introduce in its proper place, he desires me to insert here,) "was rather the effect of chance, than of design in the authour; and might have arisen either from the negligence of Shakspeare, who in this play has borrowed whole scenes and speeches from Holinshed, whose words he was probably in too much haste to compress into versification strictly regular and harmonious; or from the interpolations of Ben Jonson, whose hand Dr. Farmer thinks he occasionally perceives in the dialogue."

Whether Mr. Roderick's position be well founded, is hardly worth a contest; but the peculiarities which he has animadverted on, (if such there be) add probability to the conjecture that this piece underwent some alterations, after it had passed out of the hands of Shakspeare.

23. TROILUS AND CRESSIDA, 1602.

Troilus and Cressida was entered at Stationers' hall, Feb. 7, 1602-3, under the title of *The booke of Troilus and Cressida*, by J. Roberts, the printer of *Hamlet*, *The Merchant of Venice*, and *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*. It was therefore, probably, written in 1602. It was printed in 1609, with the title of *The History of Troilus and Cressida*, with a preface by the editor, who speaks of it as if it had not been then acted. But it is entered in 1602-3, "as acted by my Lord Chamberlen's men." The players at the Globe theatre, to which Shakspeare belonged, were called *the Lord Chamberlain's servants*, till the year 1603. In that year they obtained a licence for their exhibitions from king James; and from that time they bore the more honourable appellation of *his majesty's servants*. There can, therefore, be little doubt, that the *Troilus and Cressida* which is here entered, as acted at Shakspeare's theatre, was his play,
and

and was, if not represented, intended to have been represented there².

Perhaps the two discordant accounts, relative to this piece, may be thus reconciled. It might have been performed in 1602 at *court*, by the lord chamberlain's servants, (as many plays at that time were,) and yet not have been exhibited on the publick stage till some years afterwards. The editor in 1609 only says, "it had never been staled with the *stage*, never clapperclaw'd with the palms of *the vulgar*."

As a further proof of the early appearance of *Troilus and Cressida*, it may be observed, that an incident in it seems to be burlesqued in a comedy entitled *Histrionastix*, which, though not printed till 1610, must have been written before the death of queen Elizabeth, who, in the last act of the piece, is shadowed under the character of *Astræa*, and is spoken of as then living.

In our authour's play, when *Troilus* and *Cressida* part, he gives her his sleeve, and she, in return, presents him with her glove.

To this circumstance these lines in *Histrionastix* seem to refer. They are spoken by *Troilus* and *Cressida*, who are introduced in an interlude :

Troi. "Come, *Cressida*, my cresset light,
 "Thy face doth shine both day and night.
 "Behold, behold, thy garter blue
 "Thy knight his valiant elbow weares,
 "That, when he shakes his furious speare,
 "The foe in shivering fearful fort
 "May lay him down in death to snort.

Cress. "O knight, with valour in thy face,
 "Here take my skreene, weare it for grace;
 "Within thy helmet put the same,
 "Therewith to make thy enemies lame."

² No other play with this title has come down to us. We have therefore a right to conclude that the play entered in the books of the Stationers' company, was Shakspeare's.

In *Much ado about nothing* Troilus is mentioned as "the first employer of pandars." Shakspeare, therefore, probably had read Chaucer's poem before the year 1600, when that play was printed.

In *Cymbeline* it is said, that

"Thersites' body is as good as Ajax',
"When neither are alive."

This seems to import a precedent knowledge of Ajax and Thersites, and in this light may be regarded as a presumptive proof that *Troilus and Cressida* was written before *Cymbeline*.

Dryden supposed *Troilus and Cressida* to have been one of Shakspeare's earliest performances³; but has not mentioned on what principles he founded his judgment. Pope, on the other hand, thought it one of his last; grounding his opinion not only on the preface by the editor in 1609, but on "the great number of observations both moral and political with which this piece is crowded, more than any other of our authour's." For my own part, were it not for the entry in the Stationers' books, I should have been led, both by the colour of the writing and by the above-mentioned preface, to class it (though not one of our authour's happiest effusions) in 1608, rather than in that year in which it is here placed.

24. MEASURE FOR MEASURE, 1603.

This play was not registered at Stationers' hall, nor printed, till 1623. But from two passages in it, which seem intended as a courtly apology for the stately and ungracious demeanour of King James I. on his entry into England, it appears probable that it was written not long after his accession to the throne:

3 "The tragedy which I have undertaken to correct, was in all probability, one of his *first endeavours* on the stage.—Shakspeare (as I hinted) in the *apprenticeship of his writing* modelled it [the story of Lollius] into that play which is now called by the name of *Troilus and Cressida*."—Dryden's pref. to *Troilus and Cressida*.

" I'll privily away. I love the people,
 " But do not like to stage me to their eyes.
 " Though it do well, I do not relish well
 " Their loud applause, and aves vehement;
 " Nor do I think the man of safe discretion
 " That does affect it." *Meas. for Meas.* Act I. sc. i.

Again, Act II. sc. iv.

" ————— So
 " The general, subject to a well-wish'd king,
 " Quit their own part, and in obsequious fondness
 " Croud to his presence, where their untaught love
 " Must needs appear offence⁴."

King James was *so much offended* by the *untaught*, and, we may add, undeserved, gratulations of his subjects, on his entry into England, that he issued a proclamation, forbidding the people to resort to him.—“Afterwards,” says the historian of his reign, “in his publick appearances, especially in his sports, the accesses of the people made him so impatient, that he often dispersed them with frowns, that we may not say with *curses*⁵.”

It is observable throughout our authour's plays, that he does not scruple to introduce English signs, habits, customs, names, &c. though the scene of his drama lies in a foreign country; and that he has frequent allusions to the circumstances of the day, though the events which form the subject of his piece are supposed to have happened a thousand years before. Thus, in *Coriolanus*, *Hob* and *Dick* are plebeians; and the Romans toss their caps in the air, with the same expression of festivity which our poet's contemporaries displayed in Stratford or London. In *Twelfth Night* we hear of the bed of Ware, and the bells of Saint Bennet; and in *The Taming of the Shrew* the *Pegasus*, a sign of a publick house in Cheapside in the time of Queen Elizabeth, is hung up in a town in

⁴ See Mr. Tyrwhitt's note.

⁵ Wilson's *Hist. of K. James*, ad ann. 1603.

Italy. In *Hamlet* the Prince of Denmark and Guildenstern hold a long conversation concerning the children of the Chapel and St. Pauls'. The opening of the present play, viewed in this light, furnishes an additional argument in support of the date which I have assigned to it. When King James came to the throne of England, March 24, 1602-3, he found the kingdom engaged in a war with Spain, which had lasted near twenty years. "*Heaven grant us his peace!*" says a gentleman to Lucio, Act i. sc. ii.; and afterwards the bawd laments, that "what with *the war*, what with the sweat, she was custom-shrunk." Supposing these two passages to relate to our authour's own time, they almost decisively prove *Measure for Measure* to have been written in 1603; when the war was not yet ended, as the latter words seem to imply, and when there was some *prospect* of peace, as the former seem to intimate. Our British Solomon very soon after his accession to the throne manifested his pacifick disposition, though the peace with Spain was not proclaimed till the 19th of August, 1604.

By *the sweat*, considering who the speaker is, it is probable that the disorder most fatal to those of her profession was intended. However, the plague was sometimes so called; and perhaps the dreadful pestilence of 1603 was meant; which carried off in the month of July in that year 857 persons, and in the whole year 30,578 persons: that is, one fifth part of the people in the metropolis; the total number of the inhabitants of London being at that time about one hundred and fifty thousand. If such was the allusion, it likewise confirms the date attributed to this play.

Some part of this last argument in confirmation of the date which I had assigned some years ago to the comedy before us, I owe to Mr. Capell; and while I acknowledge the obligation, it is but just to add, that it is the only one that I met with, which in the smallest degree could throw any light on the present inquiry into the dates of our authour's plays,

"In the dry desert of *ten thousand lines*;"

after wading through two ponderous volumes in quarto, written in a style manifestly formed on that of the Clown in the comedy under our consideration, whose narratives, we are told, were calculated to last out *a night in Russia, when nights are at the longest*.

In the year 1604, says Wilson the historian, "the sword and buckler trade being out of date, diverse sects of vitious persons, under the title of *roaring boys, brava-does, roysters, &c.* commit many insolencies; the streets swarm night and day with quarrels: private duels are fomented, especially between the English and Scotch: and great feuds between protestants and papists." A proclamation was published to restrain these enormities; which proving ineffectual, the legislature interposed, and the act commonly called the statute of stabbing, 1 Jac. I. c. 8. was made. This statute, as Sir Michael Forster observes, was principally intended to put a stop to the outrages above enumerated, "committed by persons of inflammable spirits and deep resentment, who, wearing short daggers under their cloaths, were too well prepared to do quick and effectual execution upon provocations extremely slight." King James's first parliament met on the 19th of March, 1603-4, and sat till the 7th of July following. From the time of James's accession to the throne great animosity subsisted between the English and Scotch; and many of the outrageous acts which gave rise to the statute of stabbing, had been committed in the preceding year, about the end of which year I suppose *Measure for Measure* to have been written. The enumeration made by the Clown, in the fourth act, of the persons who were confined with him in the prison, is an additional confirmation of the date assigned to it. Of ten prisoners whom he names, four are stabbers, or duellists: "Master Starve-lucky, the rapier and dagger man, young Drop-heir that kill'd lusty Pudding, Master Forth-right, the tilter, and wild Half-can that stabb'd Pots."

That *Measure for Measure* was written before 1607, may be fairly concluded from the following passage in a poem

poem published in that year, which we have good ground to believe was copied from a similar thought in this play, as the authour, at the end of his piece, professes a personal regard for Shakspeare, and highly praises his *Venus and Adonis*⁴:

“ So play the foolish *throngs* with one that *fwoons* ;
 “ Come all to *help* him, and so stop the *air*
 “ By which he should revive.”

Meas. for Meas. Act II. sc. iv.

“ And like as when some sudden extasie
 “ Seizeth the nature of a sicklie man ;
 “ When he’s discern’d to *fwoune*, strait by and by
 “ Folke to his *helpe* confusedly have ran ;
 “ And seeking with their art to fetch him backe,
 “ So many *throng*, that he the *ayre* doth lacke.”

Myrrha, the Mother of Adonis, or Luste’s Prodigies,
 by William Barksted, a poem, 1607.

25. THE WINTER’S TALE, 1604.

Greene’s *Dorastus and Fawnia*, from which the plot of this play was taken, was published in 1588.

The Winter’s Tale was not entered on the Stationers’ books, nor printed till 1623, It was acted at court in 1613⁵.

⁴ See the verses alluded to, ante, p. 251, n. 4. This writer does not seem to have been very scrupulous about adopting either the thoughts or expressions of his contemporaries; for in his poem are found two lines taken *verbatim* from Marston’s *Insatiate Countess*, printed four years before *Myrrha the Mother of Adonis*, &c.

“ Night, like a masque, was enter’d heaven’s great hall,

“ With thousand torches ushering the way.”

It appears from Ben Jonson’s *Silent Woman*, that W. Barksted was an actor, and was employed in the theatre where our authour’s plays were represented. He might therefore have performed a part in *Measure for Measure*, or have seen the copy before it was printed.

⁵ Ms. of the late Mr. Vertue.—The *Tempest* was represented at the same time before the king. Hence probably they were both ridiculed by Ben Jonson in his *Barbolomew Fair*, acted in the following year.

In

In the first edition of this essay I supposed *The Winter's Tale* to have been written in 1594; an error (as it now appears to me) into which I was led by an entry in the Stationers' registers dated May 22, in that year, of a piece entitled *A Winter-Night's Pastime*, which I imagined might have been this play under another name, the titles of our authour's plays having been sometimes changed⁶.

The opinion, however, which I gave on this subject, was by no means a decided one. I then mentioned that "Mr. Walpole thought, that this play was intended by Shakspeare as an indirect apology for Anne Bullen, in which light it might be considered as a Second Part to *King Henry VIII.*; and that my respect for that very judicious and ingenious writer, the silence of Meres, in whose catalogue of our authour's dramas published in 1598 the play before us is not found, and the circumstance of there not being a single rhyming couplet throughout this piece, except in the chorus, made me doubt whether it ought not rather to be ascribed to the year 1601 or 1602, than that in which I then placed it."

The doubts which I then entertained, a more attentive examination of this play has confirmed; and I am now persuaded that it was not near so early a composition as the entry above-mentioned led me to suppose.

Mr. Walpole has observed⁷, that "*The Winter's Tale* may be ranked among the historick plays of Shakspeare, though not one of his numerous criticks and commentators have discovered the drift of it. It was certainly intended (in compliment to Queen Elizabeth) as an indirect apology for her mother Anne Boleyn. The address of the poet appears no where to more advantage. The subject was too delicate to be exhibited on the stage without a veil; and it was too recent, and touched the queen too nearly, for the bard to have ventured so home

⁶ Thus, *Hamlet* was sometimes called *Hamlet's Revenge*, sometimes *The History of Hamlet*; *The Merchant of Venice* was sometimes called *The Jew of Venice*, &c. See p. 338, n. 7.

⁷ *Historick Doubts*.

an allusion on any other ground than compliment. The unreasonable jealousy of Leontes, and his violent conduct in consequence, form a true portrait of Henry the Eighth, who generally made the law the engine of his boisterous passions. Not only the general plan of the story is most applicable, but several passages are so marked, that they touch the real history nearer than the fable. Hermione on her trial says,

“ ————— for honour,
 “ ’Tis a derivative from me to mine,
 “ And only that I stand for.”

This seems to be taken from the very letter of Anne Boleyn to the king before her execution, when she pleads for the infant princess, his daughter. Mamillius, a young prince, an unnecessary character, dies in his infancy; but it confirms the allusion, as queen Anne, before Elizabeth, had a still-born son. But the most striking passage, and which had nothing to do in the tragedy, but as it pictured Elizabeth, is, where Paulina describing the new-born princess, and her likeness to her father, says, “ *she has the very trick of his frown.*” There is another sentence indeed so applicable, both to Elizabeth and her father, that I should suspect the poet inserted it after her death. Paulina, speaking of the child, tells the king,

“ ————— ’Tis yours;
 “ And, might we lay the old proverb to your charge,
 “ So like you, ’tis the worse.”

This conjecture must, I think, be acknowledged to be extremely plausible. With respect, however, to the death of the young prince Mamillius, which is supposed to allude to Queen Anne’s having had a still-born son, it is but fair to observe, that this circumstance was not an *invention* of our poet, being founded on a similar incident in Lodge’s *Dorastus and Fawnia*, in which Garanter, the Mamillius of *The Winter’s Tale*, likewise dies in his infancy. But this by no means diminishes the force
 of

of the hypothesis which has been just now stated; it only shews, that Shakspeare was not under the necessity of twisting the story to his purpose, and that this as well as the many other corresponding circumstances between the fictitious narrative of Bellaria, (the Hermione of the present play) and the real history of the mother of Elizabeth, almost forced the subject upon him.

Sir William Blackstone has pointed out a passage in the first act of this play, which had escaped my observation, and which, as he justly observes, furnishes a proof that it was not written till after the death of queen Elizabeth:

“ — If I could find example
 “ Of thousands, that had struck anointed kings,
 “ And flourish’d after, I’d not do it; but since
 “ Nor brass, nor stone, nor parchment, bears not one,
 “ Let villainy itself forswear it.”

These lines could never have been intended for the ear of her who had deprived the queen of Scots of her life. To the son of Mary they could not but have been agreeable.

If we suppose with Mr. Walpole that this play was intended as a compliment to Queen Elizabeth, it ought rather to be attributed to the year 1602, than that in which I have placed it: but the passage last quoted is inconsistent with such a date. Mr. Walpole himself also has quoted some lines, which he thinks could not have been inserted till after the death of Elizabeth. Perhaps our authour lay’d the scheme of the play in the very year in which the queen died, and finished it in the next. This is the only supposition that I know of, by which these discordancies can be reconciled. I have therefore attributed it to 1604.

In that year was entered on the Stationers’ books “ A strange reporte of a monstrous fish, that appeared in the form of a woman from her waist upward, seene in the sea.” To this perhaps the poet alludes, when he makes Antolycus produce a ballad “ Of a fish that appeared upon the
 the

the coast, on Wednesday the fourscore of April, forty thousand fathom above water, and *sung* this ballad against the hard hearts of maids: it was thought, *she was a woman*, and was turn'd into a cold fish," &c.

There is, says one of the characters in this piece, "but one *Puritan* among them, and he sings psalms to horn-pipes." The precise manners of the puritans was at this time much ridiculed by protestants; and the principal matters in dispute between them (whether the surplice should be used in the celebration of divine service, the cross in baptism, and the ring in marriage,) were gravely discussed at Hampton Court before the king, who acted as moderator, in the beginning of the year 1604. The points discussed on that occasion were, without doubt, very popular topicks at that time; and every stroke at the Puritans, for whom King James had a hearty detestation, must have been very agreeable to him as well as to the frequenters of the theatre, against which that sect inveighed in the bitterest terms. Shakspeare, from various passages in his plays, seems to have entirely coincided in opinion with his majesty, on this subject.

The metre of *The Winter's Tale* appears to me less easy and flowing than many other of our poet's dramas; and the phraseology throughout to be more involved and parenthetical than any other of his plays. In this harshness of diction and involution of sentences it strongly resembles *Troilus and Cressida*, and *King Henry the Eighth*, which I suppose to have been written not long before.

26. KING LEAR, 1605.

The tragedy of *King Lear* was entered on the books of the Stationers' company, Nov. 26, 1607, and is there mentioned to have been played the preceding Christmas, before his majesty at Whitehall. But this, I conjecture, was not its first exhibition. It seems extremely probable that its first appearance was in March or April 1605; in which year the old play of *King Leir*, that had been entered at Stationers' hall in 1594, was printed by
Simon

Simon Stafford, for John Wright, who, we may presume, finding Shakspeare's play successful, hoped to palm the spurious one on the publick for his⁸. The old *King Leir* was entered on the Stationers' books, May 8, 1605, as it was *lately* acted.

Harfnet's *Declaration of Popish Impostures*, from which Shakspeare borrowed some fantastick names of spirits, mentioned in this play, was printed in 1603. Our author's *King Lear* was not published till 1608.

This play is ascertained to have been written after the month of October, 1604, by a minute change which Shakspeare made in a traditional line, put into the mouth of Edgar :

“ His word was still,—Fie, foh, fum,
“ I smell the blood of a *British* man.”

The old metrical saying, which is found in one of Nashe's pamphlets, printed in 1596, and in other books, was,

“ ————— Fy, fa, fum,
“ I smell the blood of an *Englishman*.”

Though a complete union of England and Scotland, which was projected in the first parliament that met after James's accession to the English throne, was not carried into effect till a century afterwards, the two kingdoms were united in *name*, and he was proclaimed king of *Great Britain*, October 24, 1604.

⁸ Shakspeare has copied one of the passages in this old play. This he might have done, though we should suppose it not to have been published till after his *King Lear* was written and acted; for the old play had been in possession of the stage for many years before 1605; and without doubt he had often seen it exhibited; nor could he have found any difficulty in procuring a manuscript copy of it, when he sat down to write his own tragedy on the same subject. I suspect, however, the old play had been published in 1594.

27. CYMBELINE, 1605.

Cymbeline was not entered in the Stationers' books nor printed till 1623. It stands the last play in the earliest folio edition; but nothing can be collected from thence, for the folio editors manifestly pay'd no attention to chronological arrangement. Nor was this negligence peculiar to them: for in the folio collection of D'Avenant's works printed after his death, *Albovine, king of the Lombards*, one of his earliest plays, which had been published in quarto, in 1629, is placed at the end of the volume.

I have found in *Cymbeline* little internal evidence by which its date might be ascertained. Such evidence, however, as it furnishes, induces me to ascribe it to 1605, after Shakspeare had composed *King Lear*, and before he had written *Macbeth*. The character of Edgar in *King Lear* is undoubtedly formed on that of *Leonatus*, the legitimate son of the blind king of Paphlagonia, in Sydney's *Arcadia*. Shakspeare having occasion to turn to that book while he was writing *King Lear*, the name of *Leonatus* adhered to his memory, and he has made it the name of one of the characters in *Cymbeline*. The story of *Lear* lies near to that of *Cymbeline* in Holinshed's *Chronicle*; and some account of Duncan and *Macbeth* is given incidentally in a subsequent page, not very distant from that part of the volume which is allotted to the history of those British kings. In Holinshed's *Scottish Chronicle* we find a story of one Hay, a husbandman, who, with his two sons, placed himself athwart a lane, and by this means stayed his flying countrymen; which turned the battle against the Danes. This circumstance, (which our poet has availed himself of in the fifth act of the play before us,) connected with what has been already mentioned relative to Sydney's *Arcadia*, renders it probable that the three plays of *King Lear*, *Cymbeline*, and *Macbeth*, were written about the same period of time, and in the order in which I have placed them. The history of King Duff, Duncan, and *Macbeth*, which Shakspeare appears to have diligently read, extends
from

from p. 150 of Holinshed's *Scottish Chronicle* to p. 176; and the story of Hay occurs in p. 154 of the same *Chronicle*.

Mr. Steevens has observed, that there is a passage in B. and Fletcher's *Philaster*, which bears a strong resemblance to a speech of Jachimo in *Cymbeline*:

- “ I hear the tread of people : I am hurt ;
 “ *The Gods take part against me : could this boor*
 “ *Have held me thus, else ?*” *Philaster*, Act IV. sc. i.
 “ ————— I have bely'd a lady,
 “ *The princess of this country ; and the air of't*
 “ *Revengingly enfeebles me ; or could this carle,*
 “ *A very drudge of natures, have subdued me*
 “ *In my profession ?*” *Cymbeline*, Act V. sc. ii.

Philaster had appeared on the stage before 1611, being mentioned by John Davies of Hereford, in his *Epigrams*, which have no date, but were published according to Oldys, in or about that year⁹. Dryden mentions a tradition, (which he might have received from Sir William D'Avenant,) that *Philaster* was the first play by which Beaumont and Fletcher acquired reputation, and that they had written two or three less successful pieces, before *Philaster* appeared. From a prologue of D'Avenant's their first production should seem to have been exhibited about the year 1605. *Philaster*, therefore, it may be presumed, was represented in 1608 or 1609.

One edition of the tract called *Westward for Smelts*, from which part of the fable of *Cymbeline* is borrowed, was published in 1603.

In this play mention is made of Cæsar's immeasurable ambition, and Cleopatra's sailing on the Cydnus to meet Antony; from which, and other circumstances, I think it probable that about this time Shakspeare perused the lives of Cæsar, Brutus, and Mark Antony.

⁹ *Additions to Langbaine's Account of the Dramatick Poets*, Ms.

28. MACBETH, 1606.

Guthrie asserts in his History of Scotland, that king James, "to prove how thoroughly he was emancipated from the tutelage of his clergy, desired Queen Elizabeth in the year 1599 to send him a company of English comedians. She complied, and James gave them a licence to act in his capital and in his court. I have great reason to think, (adds the historian,) that the immortal Shakspeare was of the number¹. But his drama, which finds access at this day to the most insensible hearts, had no charms in the eyes of the presbyterian clergy. They threatened excommunication to all who attended the play-house. Many forebore to attend the theatrical exhibitions. James considered the insolent interposition of the clergy as a fresh attack upon his prerogative, and ordered those who had been most active, to retract their menaces, which they unwillingly did; and we are told that the playhouse was then greatly crowded."

I know not to what degree of credit this anecdote is entitled; but it is certain, that James after his accession to the English throne, was a great encourager of theatrical exhibitions. From 1604 to 1608 he devoted himself entirely to hunting, masques, plays, tiltings, &c. In 1605 he visited Oxford. From a book entitled *Rex Platonicus*, cited by Dr. Farmer, we learn, that on entering the city the king was addressed by three students of St. John's college, who alternately accosted his majesty, reciting some Latin verses, founded on the prediction of the weird sisters relative to Banquo and Macbeth².

Dr. Farmer is of opinion, that this performance preceded Shakspeare's play; a supposition which is strength-

¹ If the writer had any ground for this assertion, why was it not stated? It is extremely improbable that Shakspeare should have left London at this period. In 1599 his *King Henry V.* was produced, and without doubt acted with great applause.

² See Vol. IV. p. 437.

ened by the silence of the authour of *Rex Platonicus*, who, if *Macbeth* had then appeared on the stage, would probably have mentioned something of it. It should be likewise remembered, that there subsisted at that time, a spirit of opposition and rivalry between the regular players and the academicks of the two universities; the latter of whom frequently acted plays both in Latin and English, and seem to have piqued themselves on the superiority of their exhibitions to those of the established theatres³. Wishing probably to manifest this superiority to the royal pedant, it is not likely that they would choose for a collegiate interlude, (if this little performance deserves that name,) a subject which had already appeared on the publick stage, with all the embellishments that the magick hand of Shakspeare could bestow.

In the following July (1606) the king of Denmark came to England on a visit to his sister, queen Anne, and on the 3d of August was installed a knight of the garter. "There is nothing to be heard at court," (says Drummond of Hawthornden in a letter dated that day,) but founding of trumpets, hautboys, musick, revellings, and comedies." Perhaps during this visit *Macbeth* was first exhibited.

This tragedy contains an allusion to the union of the three kingdoms of England, Scotland and Ireland, under one sovereign, and also to the cure of the king's-evil by the royal touch⁴. A ritual for the healing of that distemper was established early in this reign; but in what

3 Ab ejusdem collegii alumni (qui et cothurno tragico et focco comico principes semper habebantur) *Vertumnus*, comædia faceta, ad principes exhilarandos exhibetur. *Rex Platonicus*, p. 78.

Arcadium restauratam Isiacorum Arcadum lectissimi cecinerunt, unoque opere, principum omniumque spectantium animos immensa et ultra fidem affecerunt voluptate; simulque patrios ludiones, etsi exercitatissimos, quantum intersit inter scenam mercenariam & eruditam docuerunt. Ib. p. 228. See also the *Return from Parnassus*, (Act IV. sc. iii.) which was acted publicly at St. John's college in Cambridge.

4 *Macbeth*, Act IV. sc. i. ii.

year that pretended power was assumed by king James I. is uncertain.

Macbeth was not entered in the Stationers' books, nor printed, till 1623.

In *The Tragedy of Cæsar and Pompey, or Cæsar's Revenge*, are these lines:

“ Why, think you, lords, that 'tis *ambition's* spur
“ That pricketh Cæsar to these high attempts?”

If the authour of that play, which was published in 1607, should be thought to have had *Macbeth's* soliloquy in view, (which is not unlikely,) this circumstance may add some degree of probability to the supposition that this tragedy had appeared before that year:

“ ————— I have no *spur*
“ To prick the sides of my intent, but only
“ Vaulting *ambition*, which o'er-leaps itself,
“ And falls at the other—”

At the time when *Macbeth* is supposed to have been written, the subject, it is probable, was considered as a topick the most likely to conciliate the favour of the court. In the additions to *Warner's Albion's England*, which were first printed in 1606, the story of “ *the Three Fairies or Wëird Elves*,” as he calls them, is shortly told, and king James's descent from Banquo carefully deduced.

Ben Jonson, a few years afterwards, paid his court to his majesty by his *Masque of Queens*⁵, presented at Whitehall, Feb. 12, 1609; in which he has given a minute detail of all the magick rites that are recorded by king James in his book of *Dæmonologie*, or by any other authour ancient or modern.

⁵ Mr. Upton was of opinion that this masque preceded *Macbeth*. But the only ground which he states for this conjecture, is, “ that Jonson's pride would not suffer him to borrow from Shakspeare, though he stole from the ancients.”

Mr. Steevens has lately discovered a Ms. play, entitled *THE WITCH*, written by Thomas Middleton⁶, which renders it questionable, whether Shakspeare was not indebted to that authour for the first hint of the magick introduced in this tragedy. The reader will find an account of this singular curiosity in the note⁷.—To the observations

⁶ In an advertisement prefixed to an edition of *A Mad World my Masters*, a comedy by Thomas Middleton, 1640, the printer says, that the authour was “*long since dead.*” Middleton probably died soon after the year 1626. He was chronologer to the city of London, and it does not appear that any masque or pageant, in honour of the Lord Mayor, was set forth by him after that year*. From the dates of his printed plays, and from the ensuing verses on his last performance, by Sir William Lower, we may conclude, that he was as early a writer, and at least as old, as Shakspeare:

“*Tom Middleton his numerous issue brings,*

“*And his last muse delights us when she sings:*

“*His halting age a pleasure doth impart,*

“*And his white locks shew master of his art.*”

The following dramattick pieces by Middleton appear to have been published in his life-time. *Your Five Gallants*, no date.—*Blurt Master Constable, or the Spaniard's Night-Walk*, 1602.—*Michaelmas Term*, 1607.—*The Phoenix*, 1607.—*The Family of Love*, 1608.—*A Trick to catch the Old One*, 1608.—*A Mad World my Masters*, 1608.—*The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse*, 1611.—*Fair Quarrel*, 1617.—*A Chaste Maid of Cheapside*, 1620. *A Game at Chess*, 1625.—Most of his other plays were printed, about thirty years after his death, by Kirkman and other booksellers, into whose hands his manuscripts fell.

⁷ In a former note on this tragedy, I have said that the original edition contains only the two first words of the song in the 4th act, beginning—*Black spirits, &c.*; but have lately discovered the entire stanza in an unpublished dramattick piece, viz. “*A Tragi-Coomodie called THE WITCH; long since acted by his Ma^{ties} Servants at the Black Friars; written by Tho. Middleton.*” The song is there called—“*A charme-song, about a vessell.*” The other song omitted in the 5th scene of the 3d act of *Macbeth*, together with the imperfect couplet there, may likewise be found, as follows, in Middleton's performance.—*The Hecate of Shakspeare*, says;

“*I am for the air,*” &c.

* *The Triumph of Health and Prosperity at the Inauguration of the most worthy Brother, the Right Hon. Cutbbert Hasket, draper; composed by Thomas Middleton, draper, 1626, 4to.*

observations of Mr. Steevens I have only to add, that the songs, beginning, *Come away*, &c. and *Black spirits*, &c. being

The *Hecate* of *Middleton* (who like the former is summoned away by aerial spirits) has the same declaration in almost the same words: "I am for aloft," &c.

- "Song.] Come away, come away: } in the aire.
 "Heecat, Heecat, come away. }
- "Hec. I come, I come, I come,
 "With all the speed I may,
 "With all the speed I may.
 "Wher's *Stadlin*?
 "Heerc.] in the aire.
 "Wher's *Puckle*?
 "Heere.] in the aire.
 "And *Hoppe* too, and *Hellwaine* too. }
 "We lack but you, we lack but you: } in the aire.
 "Come away, make up the count. }
- "Hec. I will but 'noynt, and then I mount.
 "A spirit like a { There's one comes downe to fetch hisdues,
 cat descends. { A kisse, a coll, a sip of blood: } above.
 { And why thou staist so long }
 "I muse, I muse,
 "Since the air's so sweet and good.
 "Hec. Oh, art thou come?
 "What newes, what newes?
 "All goes still to our delight,
 "Either come, or els } above.
 Refuse, refuse.
 "Hec. Now I am furnish'd for the flight.
 "Fire.] Hark, hark, the catt sings a brave treble in her owne language.
 "Hec. going up.] Now I goe, now I flie,
 "Malkin, my sweete spirit, and I.
 "Oh what a daintie pleasure 'tis,
 "To ride in the aire,
 "When the moone shines faire,
 "And sing, and daunce, and toy and kifs!
 "Over woods, high rocks and mountains,
 "Over seas, our mistris' fountains,
 "Over steepe towres and turrets,
 "We fly by night 'mongst troopes of spiritts.
 "No ring of bells to our eares sounds,
 "No howles of woolves, no yelpes of hounds;
 "No, not the noyse of waters'-breache,
 "Or cannons' throat, our height can reache.
 "No ring of bells, &c.] above.
 "Fire.

being found at full length in *The Witch*, while only the two first words of them are printed in *Macbeth*, favour the

“*Fire.*] Well, mother, I thank your kindness; you must be gambolling i' th'aire, and leave me to walk here, like a foole and a mortall. *Exit.* *Finis Actus Tercii.*”

This *Fire-stone*, who occasionally interposes in the course of the dialogue, is called, in the list of Persons Represented,—“The *Clowne* and *Heccat's* son.”

Again, the *Hecate* of *Shakspeare* says to her sisters:

“I'll charm the *air* to give a sound,

“While you perform your antique round, &c.

[*Musick.* *The Witches dance and vanish.*”

The *Hecate* of *Middleton* says on a similar occasion:

“Come, my sweete sisters, let the *aire* strike our tune,

“Whilst we shew reverence to yond peeping moone.”

[*Here they dance and Exeunt.*”

In this play, the motives which incline the witches to mischief, their manners, the contents of their cauldron, &c. seem to have more than accidental resemblance to the same particulars in *Macbeth*. The hags of *Middleton*, like the weird sisters of *Shakspeare*, destroy cattle because they have been refused provisions at farm-houses. The owl and the cat (*Gray Malkin*) give them notice when it is time to proceed on their several expeditions. Thus *Shakspeare's* Witch:

“Harper cries;—’tis time, ’tis time.”

Thus too the *Hecate* of *Middleton*:

“*Hec.*] Heard you the owle yet?

“*Stad.*] Briefely in the coppes.

“*Hec.*] ’Tis high time for us then.”

The *Hecate* of *Shakspeare*, addressing her sisters, observes, that *Macbeth* is but a *wayward son*, who loves for his own ends, not for them. The *Hecate* of *Middleton* has the same observation, when the youth who has been consulting her, retires:

“I know he loves me not, nor there’s no hope on’t.”

Instead of the *grease* that’s sweaten from the murderer’s gibbet, and the *finger* of birth-strangled babe, the witches of *Middleton* employ “the gristle of a man that *bangs after sunset*,” (i. e. of a murderer, for all other criminals were anciently cut down before evening) and the “fat of an unbaptized child.” They likewise boast of the power to raise tempests that shall blow down trees, overthrow buildings, and occasion shipwreck; and, more particularly, that they can “*make miles of woods walk.*” Here too the Grecian *Hecate* is degraded into a presiding witch, and exercised in superstitions peculiar to our own country. So much for the scenes of enchantment; but even other parts of *Middle-*

son’s

the supposition that Middleton's piece preceded that of Shakspeare; the latter, it should seem, thinking it unnecessary

ton's play coincide more than once with that of *Shakspeare*. Lady *Macbeth* says, in Act II:

"—— the surfeited grooms

"Do mock their charge with *snORES*. I have drugg'd their *possets*."

So too *Francisca* in the piece of *Middleton*:

"—— they're now all at rest,

"And Galper there and all:—Lift!—fast asleepe;

"He cries it hither.—I must disease you straight, sir:

"For the maide-servants, and the girles o' th' house,

"I spic'd them lately with a *drowse* *posset*,

"They will not hear in haste."

And *Francisca*, like lady *Macbeth*, is watching late at night to encourage the perpetration of a murder.

The expression which *Shakspeare* has put into the mouth of *Macbeth*, when he is sufficiently recollected to perceive that the dagger and the blood on it, were the creations of his own fancy,—“There's no such thing,”—is likewise appropriated to *Francisca*, when she undeceives her brother, whose imagination had been equally abused.

From the instances already produced, perhaps the reader would allow, that if *Middleton*'s piece preceded *Shakspeare*'s, the originality of the magick introduced by the latter, might be fairly questioned; for our authour (who as actor, and manager, had access to unpublished dramatick performances) has so often condescended to receive hints from his contemporaries, that our suspicion of his having been a copyist in the present instance, might not be without foundation. Nay, perhaps, a time may arrive, in which it will become evident from books and manuscripts yet undiscovered and unexamined, that *Shakspeare* never attempted a play on any argument, till the effect of the same story, or at least the ruling incidents in it, had been already tried on the stage, and familiarized to his audience. Let it be remembered, in support of this conjecture, that dramatick pieces on the following subjects,—viz. *King John*, *King Richard II and III*, *King Henry IV. and V*, *King Henry VIII*, *King Lear*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Measure for Measure*, *the Merchant of Venice*, *the Taming of a Shrew*, and *the Comedy of Errors*,—had appeared before those of *Shakspeare*, and that he has taken somewhat from all of them that we have hitherto seen. I must observe at the same time, that *Middleton*, in his other dramas, is found to have borrowed little from the sentiments, and nothing from the fables of his predecessors. He is known to have written in concert with *Jonson*, *Fletcher*, *Massinger*, and *Rowley*; but appears to have been unacquainted, or at least unconnected, with *Shakspeare*.

It

unnecessary to set down verses which were probably well known, and perhaps then in the possession of the managers

It is true that the date of *THE WITCH* cannot be ascertained. The authour, however, in his dedication (*to the true lie-worthie and generously-affected Thomas Holmes Esquire*) observes, that he recovered *this ignorant-ill-fated labour of his* (from the play-house, I suppose,) *not without much difficultie.* *Witches* (continues he) *are, ipso facto, by the law condemn'd, and that onely, I thinck, bath made her lie so long in an imprison'd obscuritie.* It is probable, therefore from these words, as well as from the title-page, that the play was written *long* * before the dedication, which seems to have been added soon after the year 1603, when the act of King James against witches passed into a law. If it be objected, that *THE WITCH* appears from this title-page to have been acted only by *his majesty's servants*, let it be remembered that these were the very players who had been before in the service of the *Queen*; but *Middleton*, dedicating his work in the time of *James*, speaks of them only as dependants on the reigning prince.

Here too it may be remarked, that the first dramattick piece in which *Middleton* is known to have had a hand, viz. *The Old Law*, was acted in 1599; so that *THE WITCH* might have been composed, if not performed at an earlier period † than the accession of *James* to the crown; for the belief of witchcraft was sufficiently popular in the preceding reigns. The piece in question might likewise have been neglected through the caprice of players, or retarded till it could be known that *James* would permit such representations; (for on his arrival here, both authours and actors who should have ventured to bring the midnight mirth and jollity of witches on the stage, would probably have been indicted as favourers of magick and enchantment;) or, it might have shrunk into obscurity after the appearance of *Macbeth*; or perhaps was forbidden by the command of the king. The witches of *Shakspeare* (exclusive of the flattering circumstance to which

* That dramattick pieces were sometimes written *long* before they were printed, may be proved from the example of Marlowe's *Rich Jew of Malta*, which was entered on the books of the Stationers' company in the year 1594, but was not published till 1633, as we learn from the preface to it written by *Heywood*. It appears likewise from the same registers, that several plays were written, that were never published at all.

† The spelling in the MS. is sometimes more antiquated than any to be met with in the printed copies of *Shakspeare*, as the following instances may prove:—*Byn* for *been*—*sollempnely* for *solemnly*—*dampnation* for *damnation*—*quight* for *quite*—*grizzel* for *gristle*—*doa* for *doe*—*ollyff* for *olive*, &c.

their

managers of the Globe theatre. The high reputation of Shakspeare's performances (to mention a circumstance which in the course of these observations will be more than once insisted upon) likewise strengthens this conjecture; for it is very improbable, that Middleton, or any other poet of that time, should have ventured into

their prophecy alludes) are solemn in their operations, and therefore behaved in conformity to his majesty's own opinions. On the contrary, the hags of *Middleton* are ludicrous in their conduct, and lessen, by ridiculous combinations of images, the solemnity of that magick in which our scepter'd persecutor of old women most reverently and potently believed.

The conclusion to *Middleton's* dedication has likewise a degree of singularity that deserves notice.—“For your sake alone, she hath thus conjur'd her self abroad; and beares no other charmes about her, but what may tend to your recreation; nor no other spell, but to possess you with a beleif, that as she, so he, that *first* taught her to enchant, will alwaies be,” &c.—“He that taught her to enchant,” would have sufficiently expressed the obvious meaning of the writer, without aid from the word *first*, which seems to imply a covert censure on some person who had engaged his *Hecate* in a *secondary* course of witchcraft.

The reader must have inferred from the specimen of incantation already given, that this Ms. play (which was purchased by *Major Pearson* out of the collection of one *Griffin*, a player, and is in all probability the presentation copy) had indubitably passed through the hands of *Sir William D'Avenant*; for almost all the additions which he pretends to have made to the scenes of witchcraft in *Macbeth* (together with the names of the supplemental agents) are adopted from *Middleton*. It was not the interest therefore of *Sir William*, that this piece should ever appear in print: but time that makes important discoveries, has likewise brought his petty plagiarism to light*.

I should remark, that *Sir W. D.* has corrupted several words as well as proper names in the songs, &c. but it were needless to particularize his mistakes, as this entire tragi-comedy will hereafter be published for the satisfaction of the curious and intelligent readers of *Shakspeare*.

STEEVENS.

* *Sir William D'Avenant* might likewise have formed his play of *Albovine King of Lombardy* on some of the tragick scenes in this unpublished piece by *Middleton*. Yet the chief circumstances on which they are both founded, occur in the fourth volume of the *Histoires Tragiques*, &c. par *François de Belle-forest*, 1580, p. 297, and at the beginning of *Macbiavel's Florentine History*. STEEVENS.

those

those regions of fiction, in which our authour had *already* expatiated :

“ — Shakspeare's magick could not *copy'd* be,

“ Within that circle none durst walk but he.”

Other pieces of equal antiquity may, perhaps, be hereafter discovered ; for the names of several ancient plays are preserved, which are not known to have been ever printed. Thus we hear of *Valentine and Orson*, *plai'd by her Majesties players*,—The tragedy of *Ninus and Semiramis*,—*Titirus and Galathea*,—*Godfrey of Bulloigne*,—*The Cradle of Securitie*,—*Hit the Naile o'the Head*,—*Sir Thomas More*,—(Harl. Ms. 7368) *The Isle of Dogs*, by Thomas Nashe,—The comedy of *Fidele and Fortunatus*,—The famous tragedy of *The Destruction of Jerusalem*, by Dr. Legge,—*The Freeman's Honour*, by William Smith,—*Mahomet and Irene, the Faire Greek*,—*The Play of the Cards*,—*Cardenio*,—*The Knaves*,—*The Knot of Fools*,—*Raymond Duke of Lyons*,—*The Nobleman*, by Cyril Tourneur,—[the last five, acted in the year 1613.] *The honoured Loves*,—*The Parliament of Love*,—and *Nonsuch*, a comedy ; all by William Rowley ;—*The Pilgrimage to Parnassus*, by the authour of the *Return from Parnassus*,—*Believe as you List*, by Massinger,—*The Pirate*, by Davenport,—*Rosania or Love's Victory*, a comedy by Shirley, (some of whose plays were extant in Ms. in Langbaine's time,)—*The Twins*, a tragedy, acted in 1613,—*Tancredo*, a tragedy, by Sir Henry Wotton,—*Demetrius and Marfina, or the imperial Impostor and unhappy Heroine*, a tragedy,—*The Tyrant*, a tragedy,—*The Queen of Corsica*,—*The Bugbears*,—*The Second Maid's Tragedy*,—*Timon*, a comedy,—*Catiline's Conspiracy*, a tragedy,—and *Captain Mario*, a comedy ; both by Stephen Gosson,—*The True Historie of George Scanderbeg*, as played by the right hon. the Earl of Oxenforde's servants,—*Jane Shore*,—*The Bold Beauchamps*,—*The Second Part of Sir John Oldcastle*,—*The General*,—*The Toy*,—*The Tell-tale*³, a comedy,—*The Woman's Plot*,—*The Woman's*

³ The persons represented in this play (which is in my possession) are—Duke ; Fidelio ; Aspero ; Hortensio ; Bergias ; Picentio ; Count Gismond ;

Woman's too hard for Him, [both acted at court in 1621.]—*The Love-sick Maid*, [acted at court in 1629]—*Fulgius and Lucretia*,—*The Fool Transformed*, a comedy,—*The History of Lewis the Eleventh, King of France*, a tragi-comedy,—*The Chaste woman against her Will*, a comedy,—*The Tooth-Drawer*, a comedy,—*Honour in the End*, a comedy,—*The History of Don Quixote, or the Knight of the ill-favoured Countenance*, a comedy,—*The Fair Spanish Captive*, a tragi-comedy,—The tragedy of *Heildebrand*,—*Love yields to honour*,—*The Noble Friend*, &c. &c. Soon after the Restoration, one Kirkman, a bookseller, printed many dramattick pieces that had remained unpublished for more than sixty years; and in an advertisement subjoined to “*A true, perfect, and exact catalogue of all the comedies, tragedies, &c. that were ever yet printed and published, till this present year 1671,*” he says, that although there were, at that time, but eight hundred and six plays in print, yet many more had been written and acted, and that “he himself had some quantity in manuscript.”—The resemblance between *Macbeth* and this newly discovered piece by Middleton, naturally suggests a wish, that if any of the unpublished plays, above enumerated, be yet in being, (beside *The Second Maid's tragedy*, *The Tell-tale*, *Timon*, and *Sir Thomas More*, which are known to be extant,) their possessors would condescend to examine them with attention; as hence, perhaps, new lights might be thrown on others of our authour's plays.

It has been already suggested that it is probable our authour about the time of his composing *Cymbeline* and *Macbeth* devoted some part of his leisure to the reading of the lives of Cæsar and Anthony in North's translation of Plutarch. In the play before there are two passages which countenance that conjecture. “Under him,” says *Macbeth*,

“My genius is rebuk'd, as, it is said,
“Mark Antony's was by Cæsar.”

Gismond; Ferrese; Bentivoglio; Cosmo; Julio; Captain; Lieutenant; Ancient; two Doctors; an Ambassador; Victoria; Eleanor; Isabel; Leibia.—Scene, Florence.

The allusion here is to a passage in the Life of Antony; where Shakspeare also found an account of “the insane root that takes the reason prisoner,” which he has introduced in *Macbeth*.

A passage in the 8th book of Daniel's *Civil Wars* seems to have been formed on one in this tragedy⁹. The seventh and eighth books of Daniel's poem were first printed in 1609.

29. JULIUS CÆSAR, 1607.

A tragedy on the subject, and with the title, of *Julius Cæsar*, written by Mr. William Alexander, who was afterwards earl of Sterline, was printed in the year 1607. This, I imagine, was prior to our authour's performance, which was not entered at Stationers-hall, nor printed, till 1623. Shakspeare, we know, formed at least twelve plays on fables that had been unsuccessfully managed by other poets¹; but no contemporary writer was daring enough to enter the lists with him, in his life-time, or to model into a drama a subject which had already employed his pen: and it is not likely that Lord Sterline, who was then a very young man, and had scarcely unlearned the Scottish idiom, should have been more hardy than any other poet of that age.

I am aware, it may be objected, that this writer might have formed a drama on this story, not knowing that Shakspeare had previously composed the tragedy of *Julius Cæsar*; and that, therefore, the publication of Mr. Alexander's play in 1607, is no proof that our authour's performance did not then exist — In answer to this objection, it may, perhaps, be sufficient to observe, that Mr. Alexander had, before that year, very wisely left the bleak fields of Menstrie in Clackmananshire, for a warmer and more courtly residence in London, having

⁹ See Vol. IV. p. 299, n. 4.

¹ See a note on *Julius Cæsar*, Act I. sc. i. in which they are enumerated.

been appointed gentleman of the privy chamber to prince Henry; in which situation his literary curiosity must have been gratified by the earliest notice of the productions of his brother dramatists.

Lord Sterline's *Julius Cæsar*, though not printed till 1607, might have been written a year or two before; and perhaps its publication in that year was in consequence of our authour's play on the same subject being then first exhibited. The same observation may be made with respect to an anonymous performance, called *The Tragedie of Cæsar and Pompey, or Cæsar's Revenge*², of which an edition (I believe the second) was likewise printed in 1607. The subject of that piece is the defeat of Pompey at Pharsalia, the death of Julius, and the final overthrow of Brutus and Cassius at Philippi. The attention of the town being, perhaps, drawn to the history of the *hook-nosed fellow of Rome*, by the exhibition of Shakspeare's *Julius Cæsar*, the booksellers, who printed these two plays, might have flattered themselves with the hope of an expeditious sale for them at that time, especially as Shakspeare's play was not then published.

It does not appear that Lord Sterline's *Julius Cæsar* was ever acted: neither it nor his other plays being at all calculated for dramattick exhibition. On the other hand, Shakspeare's *Julius Cæsar* was a very popular piece; as we learn from Digges, a contemporary writer, who in his commendatory verses prefixed to our authour's works, has alluded to it as one of his most celebrated performances³.

We

² There is an edition without date, which probably was the first. This play, as appears by the title-page, was privately acted by the students of Trinity College in Oxford. In the running title it is called *The Tragedy of Julius Cæsar*; perhaps the better to impose it on the publick for the performance of Shakspeare.

- ³ "Nor fire nor cank'ring age, as Naso said
 "Of his, thy wit-fraught book shall once invade:
 "Nor shall I e'er believe or think thee dead,
 "(Though mis'd) untill our bankrout stage be sped
 "(Impossible!) with some new strain, t'out do
 "Passions of *Juliet* and her *Romeo*;

"Or

We have certain proof that *Antony and Cleopatra* was composed before the middle of the year 1608. An attentive review of that play and *Julius Cæsar*, will, I think, lead us to conclude that this latter was first written³. Not to insist on the chronology of the story, which would naturally suggest this subject to our authour before the other, in *Julius Cæsar* Shakspeare does not seem to have been thoroughly possessed of Antony's character. He has indeed marked one or two of the striking features of it, but Antony is not fully delineated till he appears in that play which takes its name from him and Cleopatra. The rough sketch would naturally precede the finished picture.

"Or till I hear a scene more nobly take

"Than when thy half-sword parlying Romans spake."

Verses by L. Digges, prefixed to the first edition of our authour's plays, in 1623.

³ The following passages in *Antony and Cleopatra*, (and others of the same kind may perhaps be found,) seem to me to discover such a knowledge of the appropriated characters of the persons exhibited in *Julius Cæsar*, and of the events there dilated and enlarged upon, as Shakspeare would necessarily have acquired from having previously written a play on that subject:

"*Pompey*.—I do not know

"Wherefore my father should revengers want,

"Having a son and friends, since *Julius Cæsar*,

"Who at *Philippi* the good *Brutus* ghosted,

"There saw you labouring for him. What was't,

"That mov'd pale *Cassius* to conspire? And what

"Made all-honour'd, honest, Roman *Brutus*,

"With the arm'd rest, courtiers of beauteous freedom,

"To drench the capitol, but that they would

"Have one man but a man?"

So, in another place:

"When Antony found *Julius Cæsar* dead,

"He cry'd almost to roaring; and he wept,

"When at *Philippi* he found *Brutus* slain."

Again:

"*Ant.* He at *Philippi* kept

"His sword ev'n like a dancer, while I struck

"The lean and wrinkled *Cassius*; and 'twas I

"That the mad *Brutus* ended."

Shakspeare's making the *capitol* the scene of Cæsar's murder, contrary to the truth of history, is easily accounted for, in *Hamlet*, where it afforded an opportunity for introducing a quibble; but it is not easy to conjecture why in *Julius Cæsar* he should have departed from Plutarch, where it is expressly said that Julius was killed in *Pompey's portico*, whose statue was placed in the centre. I suspect he was led into this deviation from history by some former play on the subject, the frequent repetition of which before his own play was written probably induced him to insert these lines in his tragedy:

“ — How many ages hence

“ Shall this our lofty scene be *acted* o'er,

“ In states unborn, and accents yet unknown!

“ How many times,” &c.

“ The accents yet unknown” could not allude to Dr. Eedes's *Latin* play exhibited in 1582, and therefore may be fairly urged as a presumptive proof that there had been some English play on this subject previous to that of Shakspeare. Hence I suppose it was, that in his earlier performance he makes Polonius say that in his youth he had *enacted* the part of the Roman Dictator, and had been killed by Brutus in the capitol; a scenick exhibition which was then probably familiar to the greater part of the audience.

From a passage in the comedy of *Every Woman in her humour*, which was printed in 1609, we learn, that there was an ancient droll or puppet-show on the subject of Julius Cæsar. “ I have seen (says one of the personages in that comedy,) *the city of Nineveh* and *Julius Cæsar* acted by mammets.” I formerly supposed that this droll was formed on the play before us: but have lately observed that it is mentioned with other “ motions,” (*Jonas*, *Ninevie*, and *the Destruction of Jerusalem*,) in Marston's *Dutch Courtesan*, printed in 1605, and was probably of a much older date.

In the prologue to *The False One*, by Beaumont and Fletcher, this play is alluded to⁴; but in what year that tragedy was written, is unknown:

If the date of *The Maid's Tragedy* by the same authours, were ascertained, it might throw some light on the present inquiry; the quarreling scene between Melantius and his friend, being manifestly copied from a similar scene in *Julius Cæsar*. It has already been observed that *Philaster* was the first play which brought Beaumont and Fletcher into reputation, and that it probably was represented in 1608 or 1609. We may therefore presume that the *Maid's Tragedy* did not appear before that year; for we cannot suppose it to have been one of the unsuccessful pieces which preceded *Philaster*. That the *Maid's Tragedy* was written before 1611, is ascertained by a Ms. play, now extant, entitled *The SECOND Maid's Tragedy*, which was licensed by Sir George Buck, on the 31st of October, 1611. I believe it never was printed⁵.

If, therefore, we fix the date of the original *Maid's Tragedy* in 1610, it agrees sufficiently well with that here assigned to *Julius Cæsar*.

It appears by the papers of the late Mr. George Vertuë, that a play called *Cæsar's Tragedy* was acted at court before the 10th of April, in the year 1613. This was

- 4 “ New titles warrant not a play for new,
 “ The subject being old; and 'tis as true,
 “ Fresh and neat matter may with ease be fram'd
 “ Out of their stories that have oft been nam'd
 “ With glory on the stage. What borrows he
 “ From him that wrought old Priam's tragedy,
 “ That writes his love for Hecuba? Sure to tell
 “ Of Cæsar's amorous heats, and *how he fell*
 “ In the Capitol, can never be the same
 “ To the judicious.” Prologue to *The False One*.

⁵ This tragedy (as I learn from a Ms. of Mr. Oldys) was formerly in the possession of John Warburton, Esq. Somerset Herald, and is now in the library of the Marquis of Lansdown. It had no authour's name to it, when it was licensed, but was afterwards ascribed to George Chapman, whose name is erased by another hand, and that of *Shakspeare* inserted.

probably Shakspeare's *Julius Cæsar*, it being much the fashion at that time to alter the titles of his plays.

30. ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA, 1608.

Antony and Cleopatra was entered on the Stationers' books, May 2, 1608; but was not printed till 1623.

In Ben Jonson's *Silent Woman*, Act IV. sc. iv. 1609, this play seems to be alluded to:

“*Morose*. Nay, I would fit out a play that were nothing but *fights at sea*, drum, trumpet and target.”

31. TIMON OF ATHENS, 1609.

32. CORIOLANUS, 1610.

These two plays were neither entered in the books of the Stationers' company, nor printed, till 1623. Shakspeare, in the course of somewhat more than twenty years, having produced thirty-four or thirty-five dramas, we may presume that he was not idle any one year of that time. Most of his *other* plays have been attributed, on plausible grounds at least, to *former years*. As we have no proof to ascertain when the two plays under our consideration were written, it seems reasonable to ascribe them to that period, to which we are not led by any particular circumstance to attribute any other of his works; at which, it is supposed, he had not ceased to write; which yet, unless these pieces were then composed, must, for aught that now appears, have been unemployed. When once he had availed himself of North's Plutarch, and had thrown any one of the lives into a dramatick form, he probably found it so easy as to induce him to proceed, till he had exhausted all the subjects which he imagined that book would afford. Hence the four plays of *Julius Cæsar*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Timon*, and *Coriolanus*, are supposed to have been written in succession. At the time he was writing *Cymbeline* and *Macbeth* there is reason to believe he began to study Plutarch with a particular
view

view to the use he might make of it on the stage*. The Lives of Cæsar and Antony are nearly connected with each other, and furnished him with the fables of two plays; and in the latter of these lives he found the subject of a third, *Timon of Athens*.

There is a Ms. comedy now extant, on the subject of *Timon*, which, from the hand-writing and the style, appears to be of the age of Shakspeare. In this piece a steward is introduced, under the name of *Laches*, who, like *Flavius* in that of our authour, endeavours to restrain his master's profusion, and faithfully attends him when he is forsaken by all his other followers.—Here too a mock-banquet is given by Timon to his false friends; but, instead of warm water, stones painted like artichokes are served up, which he throws at his guests. From a line in Shakspeare's play, one might be tempted to think that something of this sort was introduced by him; though, through the omission of a marginal direction in the only ancient copy of this piece, it has not been customary to exhibit it:

“ *Second Senator.* Lord Timon's mad.

“ *3d. Sen.* I feel it on my bones.

“ *4th Sen.* One day he gives us diamonds, next day
stones.”

This comedy, (which is evidently the production of a scholar, many lines of Greek being introduced into it,) appears to have been written after Ben Jonson's *Every Man out of his Humour*, (1599,) to which it contains a reference; but I have not discovered the precise time when it was composed. If it were ascertained, it might be some guide to us in fixing the date of our authour's *Timon of Athens*, which, on the grounds that have been already stated⁶, I suppose to have been posterior to this anonymous play.

The great plagues of 1593 and 1603 must have made such an impression upon Shakspeare, that no inference

* See p. 355, and p. 366.

⁶ P. 367.

can be safely drawn from that dreadful malady being more than once alluded to in *Timon of Athens*. However, it is *possible* that the following passages were suggested by the more immediate recollection of the plague which raged in 1609.

“ I thank them,” says Timon, “ and would send them back the plague, could I but catch it for them.”

Again:

“ Be as a planetary *plague*, when Jove
 “ Will o’er some *high-vic’d city* hang his poison
 “ I’ the sick air.”

Cominius, in the panegyrick which he pronounces on Coriolanus, says,

“ — In the brunt of seventeen battles since
 “ He *lurch’d* all swords of the garland.”

In Ben Jonson’s *Silent Woman*, Act V. sc. last, we find (as Mr. Steevens has observed) the same phraseology: “ You have *lurch’d* your friends of the better half of the garland.”

I formerly thought this a sneer at Shakspeare; but have lately met with nearly the same phrase in a pamphlet written by Thomas Nashe, and suppose it to have been a common phrase of that time.

This play is ascertained to have been written after the publication of Camden’s *Remaines*, in 1605, by a speech of Menenius in the first act, in which he endeavours to convince the seditious populace of their unreasonableness by the well-known apologue of the members of the body rebelling against the belly. This tale Shakspeare certainly found in the *Life of Coriolanus* as translated by North, and in general he has followed it as it is there given: but the same tale is also told of Adrian the Fourth by Camden, in his *Remaines*, p. 199, under the head of *Wise Speeches*, with more particularity; and one or two of the expressions, as well as the enumeration of the

the functions performed by each of the members of the body, appear to have been taken from that book.

“On a time,” says Menenius in *Plutarch*, “all the members of man’s body dyd rebel against the bellie, complaining of it that it only remained in the midst of the bodie without doing any thing, neither dyd bear any labour to the maintenaunce of the rest: whereas all other partes and members dyd labour paynefully, and was veri careful to satisfy the appetites and desiers of the bodie. And so the bellie, all this notwithstanding, laughed at their follie, and sayde, it is true, I first receyve all meates that norishe mans bodie; but afterwarde I send it againe to the norishment of other partes of the same. Even so (qd. he,) o you, my masters and citizens of Rome,” &c.

In Camden the tale runs thus: “All the members of the body conspired against the stomach, as against the *swallowing gulfe* of all their labours; for whereas *the eyes beheld, the eares heard, the handes laboured, the feete travelled, the tongue spake, and all partes performed their functions*; onely the stomache lay ydle and consumed all. Hereuppon they joyntly agreed al to forbear their labours, and to pine away their lazie and publike enemy. One day passed over, the second followed very tedious, but the third day was so grievous to them all, that they called a common counsel. The eyes waxed dimme, the feete could not support the body; the armes waxed lazie, the tongue faltered, and could not lay open the matter. Therefore they all with one accord desired the *advice* of the heart. There *Reason* layd open before them,” &c.

So Shakspeare:

“There was a time when all the body’s members
 “Rebell’d against the belly; thus accus’d it:—
 “That only *like a gulph* it did remain
 “In the midst of the body, idle and unactive,
 “Still cupboarding the viand, never bearing
 “Like labour with the rest; where the other instruments
 “Did *see and hear, devise, instruct, walk, feel,*
 “And mutually participate did minister

[A a 4]

“Unto

" Unto the appetite and affection common
 " Of the whole body, The belly answered—
 " True it is, my incorporate friends, quoth he,
 " That I receive the general food at first;—
 " ————— But, if you do remember,
 " I send it through the rivers of the blood,
 " Even to the court, *the heart, to the seat o' the brain.*"

The heart is called by one of the citizens, "the *counsellor-heart*;" and in making the *counsellor-heart* the seat of the brain or understanding, where *Reason* sits enthroned, Shakspeare has certainly followed Camden.

The late date which I have assigned to *Coriolanus*, derives likewise some support from Volumnia's exhortation to her son, whom she advises to address the Roman people—

" ————— now humble as the *ripest mulberry*,
 " Which cannot bear the handling."

In a preceding page I have observed that mulberries were not much known in England before the year 1609, Some *few* mulberry-trees however had been brought from France and planted before that period, and Shakspeare, we find, had seen some of the fruit in a state of maturity before he wrote *Coriolanus*,

33. OTHELLO, 1611.

Dr. Warburton thinks that there is in this tragedy a satirical allusion to the institution of the order of Barons, which dignity was created by king James I. in the year 1611:

" — The hearts of old gave hands,
 " But our new heraldry is hands, not hearts."

Othello, Act III. sc. iv.

" Amongst their other prerogatives of honour," (says that commentator,) " they [the new-created barons] had an addition to their paternal arms, of an hand *gules* in an escutcheon argent. And we are not to doubt but that this was *the new heraldry* alluded to by our author;
by

by which he insinuates, *that some then created had hands indeed, but not hearts; that is, money to pay for the creation, but no virtue to purchase the honour.*"

Such is the observation of this critick. But by what chymistry can the sense which he has affixed to this passage, be extracted from it? Or is it probable, that Shakspeare, who has more than once condescended to be the encomiast of the unworthy founder of the order of Baronets, who had been personally honoured by a letter from his majesty, and substantially benefited by the royal licence granted to him and his fellow-comedians, should have been so impolitick, as to satirize the king, or to deprectate his new-created dignity?

These lines appear to me to afford an obvious meaning, without supposing them to contain such a multitude of allusions:

Of old, (says Othello,) in matrimonial alliances, the heart dictated the union of hands; but our modern junctions are those of hands, not of hearts.

On every marriage the arms of the wife are united to those of the husband. This circumstance, I believe, it was, that suggested *heraldry*, in this place, to our author. I know not whether a heart was ever used as an armorial ensign, nor is it, I conceive, necessary to inquire. It was the office of the herald to *join*, or, to speak technically, to *quarter* the arms of the new-married pair⁷. Hence, with his usual licence, Shakspeare uses *heraldry* for *junction*, or *union* in general. Thus, in his *Rape of Lucrece*, the same term is employed to denote that *union* of colours which constitutes a beautiful complexion:

"This *heraldry* in Lucrece' face was seen,

"Argued by beauty's red, and virtue's white."

This passage not affording us any assistance, we are next to consider one in *The Alchemist*, by Ben Jonson,

⁷ "I may *quarter*, coz," says Slender in the *Merry Wives of Windsor*, "You may (replies justice Shallow) by *marrying*."

which,

which, if it alluded to an incident in *Othello*, (as Mr. Steevens seems to think it does,) would ascertain this play to have appeared before 1610, in which year *The Alchemist* was first acted :

“ *Loverwit*. Didst thou hear a cry, say’st thou ?

“ *Neighbb*. Yes, fir, like unto a man that had been strangled an hour, and could not speak.”

But I doubt whether *Othello* was here in Jonson’s contemplation. Old Ben generally spoke out ; and if he had intended to sneer at the manner of Desdemona’s death, I think, he would have taken care that his meaning should not be mis’d, and would have written—“ like unto a *woman*,” &c.

This tragedy was not entered on the books of the Stationers’ company, till Oct 6, 1621, nor printed till the following year ; but it was acted at court early in the year 1613⁸. How long before that time it had appeared, I have not been able to ascertain, either from the play itself, or from any contemporary production. I have, however, persuaded myself that it was one of Shakspere’s latest performances : a supposition, to which the acknowledged excellence of the piece gives some degree of probability. It is here attributed to the year 1611, because Dr. Warburton’s comment on the passage above-cited may convince others, though, I confess it does not satisfy me.

Emilia and *Lodovico*, two of the characters in this play, are likewise two of the persons represented in *May-day*, a comedy by Chapman, first printed in 1611.

34. THE TEMPEST, 1612.

Though some account of the Bermuda Islands, which are mentioned in this play, had been published in 1600, (as Dr. Farmer has observed,) yet as they were not generally known till Sir George Somers arrived there

⁸ Mf. Vertue.

in 1609, *The Tempest* may be fairly attributed to a period subsequent to that year: especially as it exhibits such strong internal marks of having been a late production.

The entry at Stationers' hall does not contribute to ascertain the time of its composition; for it appears not on the Stationers' books, nor was it printed, till 1623, when it was published with the rest of our authour's plays in folio: in which edition, having, I suppose by mere accident, obtained the first place, it has ever since preserved a station to which indubitably it is not entitled².

As the circumstance from which this piece receives its name, is at an end in the very first scene, and as many other titles, all equally proper, might have occurred to Shakspeare, (such as *The Incharnted Island*,—*The Banished Duke*,—*Ferdinand and Miranda*, &c.) it is possible, that some particular and recent event determined him to call it *The Tempest*. It appears from Stowe's *Chronicle*, p. 913, that in the October, November, and December of the year 1612, a dreadful tempest happened in England, "*which did exceeding great damage, with extreme shipwreck throughout the ocean.*" "*There perished*" (says the historian) "*above an hundred ships in the space of two houres.*"—Several pamphlets were published on this occasion, decorated with prints of sinking vessels, castles toppling on their warders' heads, the devil overturning steeples, &c. In one of them, the authour describing the appearance of the waves at Dover, says, "*the whole seas appeared like a fiery world, all sparkling red.*" Another of these narratives recounts the escape of Edmond Pet, a sailor; whose preservation appears to have been no less marvellous than that of Trinculo or Stephano: and so great a terror did this tempest create in the minds of the people, that a form of prayer was ordered on the occasion, which is annexed to one of the publications above mentioned.

There is reason to believe that some of our authour's dramas obtained their names from the seasons at which they were produced. It is not very easy to account for

²See p. 354, Article, *Cymbeline*.

the title of *Twelfth Night*, but by supposing it to have been first exhibited in the Christmas holydays¹. Neither the title of *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, nor that of *The Winter's Tale*, denotes the season of the action; the events which are the subject of the latter, occurring at the time of sheep-shearing, and the dream, from which the former receives its name, happening on the night preceding May-day — These titles, therefore, were probably suggested by the season at which the plays were exhibited, to which they belong; *A Midsummer-Night's Dream* having, we may presume, been first represented in June, and *The Winter's Tale* in December.

Perhaps then it may not be thought a very improbable conjecture, that this comedy was written in the summer of 1612, and produced on the stage in the latter end of that year; and that the authour availed himself of a circumstance then fresh in the minds of his audience, by affixing a title to it, which was more likely to excite curiosity than any other that he could have chosen, while at the same time it was sufficiently justified by the subject of the drama.

Mr. Steevens, in his observations on this play, has quoted from the tragedy of *Darius* by the earl of Sterling, first printed in 1603, some lines² so strongly resembling

¹ It was formerly an established custom to have plays represented at court in the Christmas holydays, and particularly on *Twelfth Night*. Two of Lily's comedies (*Alexander and Campaspe*, 1584, and *Mydas*, 1592,) are said in their title pages, to have been *played besooke the queenes majestie on Twelfe-day at night*; and several of Ben Jonson's masques were presented at Whitehall, on the same festival. Our authour's *Lowe's Labour's Lost* was exhibited before queen Elizabeth in the Christmas holydays; and his *King Lear* was acted before king James on St. Stephen's night: the night after Christmas-day.

- ² "Let greatness of her glassy scepters vaunt,
 "Not scepters, no but reeds, soon bruised, soon broken,
 "And let this worldly pomp our wits enchant,
 "All fades, and scarcely leaves behind a token.
 "Those golden palaces, those gorgeous halls,
 "With furniture superfluously fair,
 "Those stately courts, those sky-encount'ring walls,
 "Evanish all like vapours in the air."

Darius, Act III. Ed. 1603.

" ——— There

sembling a celebrated passage in *The Tempest*, that one authour must, I apprehend, have been indebted to the other. Shakspeare, I imagine, borrowed from lord Sterline³.

Mr. Holt conjectured⁴, that the masque in the fifth act of this comedy was intended by the poet as a compliment to the earl of Essex, on his being united in wedlock, in 1611, to lady Frances Howard, to whom he had been contracted some years before⁵. However this might have been, the date which that commentator has assigned to this play, (1614,) is certainly too late; for it appears from the Mss. of Mr. Vertue, that the *Tempest* was acted by John Heminge and the rest of the King's Company, before prince Charles, the lady Elizabeth, and the prince Palatine elector, in the beginning of the year 1613.

The names of *Trinculo* and *Antonio*, two of the characters in this comedy, are likewise found in that of *Albuzar*; which was printed in 1614, but is supposed by Dryden to have appeared some years before.

Ben Jonson probably meant to sneer at this play in the prologue to *Every man in his humour*, first printed in 1616, and probably written a few years before:

“ ——— nor tempestuous drum

“ Rumble to tell you when *the storm* will come.”

“ ——— These our actors,

“ As I foretold you, were all spirits, and

“ Are melted into air, into thin air;

“ And, like the baseless fabrick of this vision,

“ The cloud-capt tow'rs, the gorgeous palaces,

“ The solemn temples, the great globe itself,

“ Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,

“ And, like this unsubstantial pageant faded,

“ Leave not a rack behind.”

Tempest, Act IV. sc. i.

³ See a note on *Julius Cæsar*, Act I. sc. i.

⁴ Observations on the *Tempest*, p. 67. Mr. Holt imagined, that lord Essex was united to lady Frances Howard in 1610; but he was mistaken: their union did not take place till the next year.

⁵ Jan. 5, 1606-7. The earl continued abroad four years from that time; so that he did not cohabit with his wife till 1611.

In the induction to his *Bartholomew Fair* he has endeavoured to depreciate this beautiful comedy by calling it a *foolery*. Dryden, however, informs us that it was a very popular play at Blackfriars, but unluckily has not said a word relative to the time of its first representation there, though he might certainly have received information on that subject from Sir William D'Avenant.

The only note of time which I have observed in this play, is in Act II. sc. ii. "— when they [the English] will not give a doit to relieve a lame beggar, they will lay out ten to see a dead Indian." This probably alludes to some recent circumstance with which I am unacquainted.

35. TWELFTH NIGHT, 1614.

It has been generally believed, that Shakspeare retired from the theatre, and ceased to write, about three years before he died. The latter supposition must now be considered as extremely doubtful; for Mr. Tyrwhitt, with great probability, conjectures, that *Twelfth Night* was written in 1614: grounding his opinion on an allusion⁶, which it seems to contain, to those parliamentary *undertakers* of whom frequent mention is made in the Journals of the House of Commons for that year⁷; who were stigmatized with this invidious name, on account of their having *undertaken* to manage the elections of knights and burgesses in such a manner as to secure a majority in parliament for the court. If this allusion was intended, *Twelfth Night* was probably our authour's last production; and, we may presume, was written after he had retired to Stratford. It is observable that Mr. Ashley, a member of the House of Commons, in one of the debates on this subject, says, "that the rumour concerning these *undertakers* had spread into the country."

⁶ "Nay, if you be an *undertaker*, I am for you." See *Twelfth Night*, Act IV. sc. iii. and the note there.

⁷ Comm. Journ. Vol. I. p. 456, 457, 470.

When Shakspeare quitted London and his profession, for the tranquillity of a rural retirement, it is improbable that such an excursive genius should have been immediately reconciled to a state of mental inactivity. It is more natural to conceive, that he should have occasionally bent his thoughts towards the theatre, which his muse had supported, and the interest of his associates whom he had left behind him to struggle with the capricious vicissitudes of publick taste, and whom, his last Will shews us, he had not forgotten. To the necessity, therefore, of literary amusement to every cultivated mind, or to the dictates of friendship, or to both these incentives, we are perhaps indebted for the comedy of *Twelfth Night*; which bears evident marks of having been composed at leisure, as most of the characters that it contains, are finished to a higher degree of dramattick perfection, than is discoverable in some of our authour's earlier comick performances⁸.

In the third act of this comedy, Decker's *Westward Hoe* seems to be alluded to. *Westward Hoe* was printed in 1607, and from the prologue to *Eastward Hoe* appears to have been acted in 1604, or before.

Maria, in *Twelfth Night*, speaking of Malvolio, says, "he does smile his face into more lines than the new map with the augmentation of the Indies." I have not been able to learn the date of the map here alluded to; but, as it is spoken of as a recent publication, it may, when discovered, serve to ascertain the date of this play more exactly.

The comedy of *What you will*, (the second title of the play now before us,) which was entered at Stationers' hall, Aug. 9, 1607, was certainly Marston's play, as it was printed in that year for T. Thorpe, by whom the above-mentioned entry was made; and it appears to have been the general practice of the booksellers at that time, re-

⁸ The comedies particularly alluded to, are, *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *Love's Labour's Lost*, and *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*.

cently before publication, to enter those plays of which they had procured copies.

Twelfth Night was not registered on the Stationers' books, nor printed, till 1623.

It has been thought, that Ben Jonson intended to ridicule the conduct of this play, in his *Every Man out of his Humour*, at the end of Act III. sc. vi. where he makes Mitis say,—“ That the argument of his comedy might have been of some other nature, as of a duke to be in love with a countess, and that countess to be in love with the duke's son, and the son in love with the lady's waiting-maid: *some such cross wooing, with a clown to their serving-man*, better than be thus near and familiarly allied to the time⁹.”

I do not, however, believe, that Jonson had here *Twelfth Night* in contemplation. If an allusion to this comedy were intended, it would ascertain it to have been written before 1599, when *Every Man out of his Humour* was first acted. But Meres does not mention *Twelfth Night* in 1598, nor is there any reason to believe that it then existed.

“ Mrs. Mall's picture,” which is mentioned in this play, probably means the picture of Moll Cutpurse, who was born in 1585, and made much noise in London about the year 1611.

The *Sophy of Persia* is twice mentioned in *Twelfth Night*. 1. “ I will not give my part of this sport for a pension of thousands to be paid by *the Sophy*.” 2. “ He pays you as sure as your feet hit the ground you step on. They say he has been fencer to *the Sophy*.”

When Shakspeare wrote the first of these passages, he was perhaps thinking of Sir Robert Shirley, “ who,” says Stowe's Continuator, “ after having served the *Sophy of Persia* for ten years as general of artillerie, and married the Lady Teresa, whose sister was one of the queens of Persia, arrived in England as ambassador from the *Sophy* in 1612. After staying one year he

⁹ See the first note on *Twelfth Night*, Act I. sc. i.

and his wife returned to Persia, (Jan. 1612-13,) leaving a son, to whom the queen was godmother, and Prince Henry godfather."

Camden's account agrees with this, for according to him Sir Robert Shirley came to England on his embassy, June 26, 1612: but both the accounts are erroneous; for Sir Robert Shirley certainly arrived in London as ambassador from the Sophy in 1611, as appears from a letter written by him to Henry prince of Wales, dated Nov. 4, 1611, requesting the prince to be godfather to his son¹. Sir Robert, and his Persian Lady, at this time made much noise; and Shakspeare, it is highly probable, here alludes to the magnificence which he displayed during his stay in England, out of the funds allotted to him by the emperor of Persia. He remained in England about eighteen months.

If the dates here assigned to our authour's plays should not, in every instance, bring with them conviction of their propriety, let it be remembered, that this is a subject on which conviction cannot at this day be obtained; and that the observations now submitted to the publick, do not pretend to any higher title than that of "AN ATTEMPT to ascertain the chronology of the dramas of Shakspeare."

Should the errors and deficiencies of this essay invite others to deeper and more successful researches, the end proposed by it will be attained: and he who offers the present arrangement of Shakspeare's dramas, will be happy to transfer the slender portion of credit that may result from the novelty of his undertaking, to some future claimant, who may be supplied with ampler materials, and endued with a superior degree of antiquarian sagacity.

To some, he is not unapprized, this inquiry will appear a tedious and barren speculation. But there are

¹ Mss. Harl. 7008.

many, it is hoped, who think nothing which relates to the brightest ornament of the English nation, wholly uninteresting; who will be gratified by observing, how the genius of our great poet gradually expanded itself, till, like his own Ariel, *it flamed amazement* in every quarter, blazing forth with a lustre, that has not hitherto been equalled, and probably will never be surpassed.

MALONE.

SHAKSPEARE, FORD, AND JONSON.

— *ubi nulla fugam reperit fallacia, victus,
In sese redit.*

VIRG.

I HAVE long had great doubts concerning the authenticity of the facts mentioned in a letter printed in a former page, [see p. 202,] giving a pretended extract from a pamphlet of the last age, entitled “*Old Ben’s Light Heart made heavy by young John’s Melancholy Lover,*” containing some anecdotes of Shakspeare, Ben Jonson, and John Ford, the dramatick poet; and suspected that the plausible tale which the writer of the letter alluded to has told, was an innocent forgery, fabricated for the purpose of aiding a benefit, and making the town believe that *The Lover’s Melancholy* came from the mint of Shakspeare. Some additional information on this subject, which I have lately obtained, appears to me so decisively to confirm and establish my opinion, that I shall here, though somewhat out of place, devote a few pages to the examination of this question.

Having always thought with indignation on the tastelessness of the scholars of that age in preferring Jonson to Shakspeare after the death of the latter, I did not find myself much inclined to dispute the authenticity of a paper, which, in its general tenour, was conformable to my own notions: but the love of truth ought ever to be superior to such considerations. Our poet’s fame is fixed upon a basis *as broad and general as the casing air*, and stands in no need of such meretricious aids as the pen of fiction may be able to furnish. However, before I entered on this discussion, I thought it incumbent on me to apply to Mr. Macklin, the authour of the letter in question, upon the subject: but his memory is so much impaired, (he being now in the ninety-first year of his age,) that he scarcely recollects having written such a letter, much less the circumstances attending it. I ought, however, to add, that I had some conversation with him a few years ago upon the same topick, and then strongly urged to

[B b 2]

him

him that no kind of disgrace could attend his owning that this letter was a mere *jeu d'esprit*, written for an occasional harmless purpose: but he persisted in asserting that the pamphlet of which he has given an account, (for which I in vain offered by a publick advertisement, continued for some time in the newspapers, to pay two guineas, and of which no copy has been found in any publick or private library in the course of forty years,) was once in his possession; was printed in quarto, and bound up with several small political tracts of the same period; and was lost with a large collection of old plays and other books, on the coast of Ireland, in the year 1760. I cannot therefore boast, *habeo consistentem reum*. However, let the point be tried by those rules of evidence which regulate trials of greater importance; and I make no doubt that I shall be able to produce such testimony as shall convict our veteran comedian of having, sportively, ingeniously, and falsely, (though with no malice afore-thought,) invented and fabricated the narrative given in the letter already mentioned, contrary to the Statute of Biography, and other wholesome laws of the Parnassian Code, in this case made and provided, for the security of the rights of authours, and the greater certainty and authenticity of dramattick history.

Nor let our poet's admirers be at all alarmed, or shrink from this discussion; for after this slight and temporary fabrick, erected to his honour, shall have been demolished, there will still remain abundant proofs of the gentleness, modesty, and humility, of Shakspeare; of the overweening arrogance of old Ben; and of the ridiculous absurdity of his partizans, who for near a century set *above* our great dramattick poet a writer whom no man is now hardy enough to mention as even his competitor.

I must premise, that *The Lover's Melancholy*, written by John Ford, was *announced* for representation at Drury-lane theatre on Friday the 22d of April, 1748. Mr. Steevens has mentioned that it was performed for a *benefit*; but the person for whose benefit this play was acted is in the present case very material: it was performed

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for the benefit of Mrs. Macklin; and consequently it was the interest of Mr. Macklin that the entertainment of that night should prove profitable, or in other words that such expectation should be raised among the frequenters of the playhouse as should draw together a numerous audience. Mr. Macklin, who had then been on the stage about twenty-five years, was sufficiently conversant with the arts of puffing, which, though now practised with perhaps superior dexterity, have at all times (by whatever name they may have gone) been tolerably well understood: and accordingly on Tuesday the 19th of April, three days before the day appointed for his wife's benefit, he inserted the following letter in *The General* (now *The Publick*) *Advertiser*, which appears to have escaped the notice of my predecessor:

' Sir,

' As *The Lover's Melancholy*, which is to be revived on Friday next at the theatre-royal in Drury-Lane, for the benefit of Mrs. Macklin, is a scarce play, and in a very few hands, it is hoped, that a short account of the author, his works in general, and of that piece in particular, will not be unacceptable to the publick.'

' John Ford, Esq. was of the Middle Temple, and though but a young man when Shakspeare left the stage, yet as he lived in strict friendship with him till he died, which appears by several of Ford's sonnets and verses, it may be said with some propriety that he was a contemporary of that great man's.'

' It is said that he wrote twelve or fourteen dramatick pieces, eight of which only have been collected, viz. *The Broken Heart*, *Love's Sacrifice*, *Perkin Warbeck*, *The Ladies' Trial*, *'Tis Pity she's a Whore*, *The Sun's Darling*, a Masque, and *The Lover's Melancholy*.'

' Most of those pieces have great merit in them, particularly *The Lover's Melancholy*; which in the private opinion of many admirers of the stage, is written with an art, ease, and dramatick spirit, inferior to none before or since his time, Shakspeare excepted.'

' The moral of this play is obvious and laudable; the fable natural, simple, interesting, and perfect in all

its parts; the action one and entire; the time twelve hours, and the place a palace.'

'The writing, as the piece is of that species of the drama, which is neither tragedy, nor comedy, but a play, is often in familiar, and sometimes in elevated, prose, *after the manner of Shakspeare*; but when his subject and characters demand it, he has sentiment, diction, and flowing numbers, at command.'

'His characters are natural, and well chosen, and so distinct in manners, sentiment, and language, that each as he speaks would distinctly live in the reader's judgment, without the common help of marginal directions.'

'As Ford was an intimate and a professed admirer of Shakspeare, it is not to be wondered at, that *he often thinks and expresses like him*; which is not his misfortune, but his happiness; for when he is most like Shakspeare, he is most like nature. He does not put you in mind of him like a plagiarist, or an affected mere imitator; but like a true genius, who had studied under that great man, and could not avoid catching some of his divine excellence.'

'This praise perhaps by some people may be thought too much: of that the praiser pretends not to be a judge; he only speaks his own feeling, not with an intent to impose, but to recommend a treasure to the publick, that for a century has been buried in obscurity; which *when they have seen*, he flatters himself that they will think as well of it as he does; and should that be the case, the following verses, written by Mr. Ford's contemporaries, will shew, that neither the present publick, nor the letter-writer, are singular in their esteem of *The Lover's Melancholy*.'

"To my honoured friend, Master JOHN FORD,
on his [excellent play, *The*]² *Lover's Melancholy*.

"If that thou think'st these lines thy worth can raise,
"Thou dost mistake; my liking is no praise:

² The words within crotchets here and below were interpolated by Mr. Macklin, not being found in the original.

"Nor

- " Nor can I think thy judgment is so ill,
 " To seek for bays from such a barren quill.
 " Let your true critick that can judge and mend,
 " Allow thy scenes, and stile: I, as a friend
 " That knows thy worth, do only stick my name,
 " To shew my love, not to advance thy fame."

G. DONNE.

On [that excellent play] *The Lover's Melancholy*.

- " 'Tis not the language, nor the fore-plac'd rhimes
 " Of friends that shall commend to after-times
 " *The Lover's Melancholy*; its own worth
 " Without a borrow'd praise shall set it forth."

PHILOS³.

Your's, B. B.'

How far *The Lover's Melancholy* is entitled to all this high praise, it is not my business at present to inquire. I shall only observe, that this kind of prelude to a benefit play appears at that period to have been a common artifice. For *The Muses Looking-Glass*, an old comedy of Randolph's, being revived for the benefit of Mr. Ryan in 1748, I find an account of the authour, and an high eulogium on his works, in the form of a letter, inserted in the month of March, in the same newspaper.

In the preceding letter it is observable, we are only told that the authour of *The Lover's Melancholy* lived in the strictest intimacy with Shakspeare till he died, *as appears by several of Ford's Sonnets and Verses* (which unluckily, however, *are no where to be found*); that the piece is inferior to none written before or since, except those of Shakspeare; that as Ford was an intimate and professed admirer of Shakspeare, and had studied under him, it is not to be wondered at that it should be written *in his manner*, and that the authour should have caught some portion of his divine excellence: but no hint is yet given,

³ In the original, this signature is in Greek characters, Ο φίλος; a language with which Mr. Macklin is unacquainted. In this instance therefore he must have had the assistance of some more learned friend.

that *The Lover's Melancholy* had a still higher claim to the attention of the town than being written in Shakspeare's manner, namely its being supposed to be compiled from the papers of that great poet, which, after his death, as we shall presently hear, fell into Ford's hands. And yet undoubtedly this valuable piece of information was on Monday the 21st day of April, (when this letter appears to have been written,) in Mr. Macklin's possession, *if ever he was possessed of it*; for so improbable a circumstance will not, I suppose, be urged, as that he found the uncommon pamphlet in which it is said to be contained, between that day and the following Friday.

Judiciously as the preceding letter was calculated to attain the end for which it was written, it appears not to have made a sufficient impression on the publick. All the boxes for Mrs. Macklin's benefit, it should seem, were not yet taken; and the town was not quite so anxious as might have been expected, to see this transcendent and incomparable secular tragedy; though it was announced in the bills as not having been performed for one hundred years; though its moral, fable, and action, were all perfect and entire; though the time consumed in the drama was as little as the most rigid French critic could exact; and though the audience during the whole representation would enjoy the supreme felicity of beholding not a forest, an open plain, or a common room, but the inside of a palace. What then was to be done? An ordinary application having failed, Spanish flies are to be tried; for though the publick might not go to see a play *written in the manner of Shakspeare*, they could not be so insensible as not to have some curiosity about a piece, which, if the insinuations of the authour's contemporaries were to be credited, was *actually written by him*; a play, which none of them had ever seen represented, and very few had read or even heard of. Mr. Barry, a principal performer in this revived tragedy, is very *commodiously* taken ill; and the representation, which had been announced for Friday the 22d, is deferred to Thursday the 28th, of April. Full of the new idea, the letter-writer takes up his pen; but fabricks of this kind
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are not easily constructed, so as to be secure on every side from assault. However, in three days the whole structure was raised; and on Saturday morning the 23d of April appeared in *The General Advertiser* a Second Eulogy on *The Lover's Melancholy*, which I am now to examine.

This letter of the 23d of April which we are now to consider, having been printed in a former page⁴, the reader can easily turn to it. Before, however, I enter upon an examination of its contents, I will just observe, that the attention of the publick had been drawn in a peculiar manner to our authour's productions by the publication of Dr. Warburton's long expected edition of his plays in the preceding year, and was still more strongly fixed on the same object by Mr. Edwards's ingenious *Canons of Criticism*, which first appeared in the month of April, 1748.

Mr. Macklin begins his second letter with the mention of a pamphlet written in the reign of Charles the First, with this quaint title—"Old Ben's *Light Heart* made heavy by young John's *Melancholy Lover*;" and as this curious pamphlet contains "some historical anecdotes and altercations concerning Ben Jonson, Ford, Shakspeare, and *The Lover's Melancholy*," he makes no doubt that a few extracts from it will "*at this juncture*" be acceptable to the publick.

He next observes, that Ben Jonson from great critical language, (*learning*, he should have said,) which was then the portion of but very few, from his merit as a poet, and his association with men of letters, for a considerable time gave laws to the stage. That old Ben was splenetick, sour, and envious; too proud of his own works, and too severe in his censure of those of his contemporaries. That this arrogance raised him many enemies, who were particularly offended by the *slights* and *malignancies* which the *rigid* Ben threw out against the *lowly* Shakspeare, "whose fame, *since his death*, as appears by the pamphlet, was grown too great for Ben's envy either to bear with or wound."

⁴ See p. 202.

To give the whole of these investives, we are then told, would take up too much room; but among other instances of Jonson's ill-nature and ingratitude to Shakspeare, "who first introduced him to the theatre and to fame," it is stated, *from the pamphlet*, that Ben had asserted, that Shakspeare had indeed wit and imagination, but that they were not guided by judgment, being ever servile to raise the laughter of fools and the wonder of the ignorant; that he had little Latin, and less Greek: and the writer of the pamphlet, as a further proof of Ben's malignity, quotes some lines from the prologue to *Every man in his humour*,—

"To make a child new swaddled, to proceed
 "Man, and then shoot up, in one beard and weed,
 "Past threescore years," &c.

which were levelled at some of Shakspeare's plays. The first of the lines quoted, and above given, we are told in a note, was pointed at *The Winter's Tale*; but whether this note was furnished by the pamphlet or by the writer of the letter, we are left to conjecture. Whichsoever of these we are to suppose, the fact is undoubtedly not true; for the new-born child introduced in *The Winter's Tale* never does in the course of the play shoot up *man*, being no other than the lovely Perdita. In the following lines however of that prologue, our poet is undoubtedly sneered at.

So much for Shakspeare. We are now brought to *The Lover's Melancholy*; the extraordinary success of which, the pamphlet informs us, wounded Ben the more sensibly, as it was brought out on the same stage, and in the same week, with his *New Inn* or *Light Heart*, which was damned; and as Ford, the writer of *The Lover's Melancholy*, was at the head of Shakspeare's partizans. The ill success of the *Light Heart*, we are next told, so incensed Jonson, that, when he printed his play, he described it in the title-page, as a comedy *never acted, but most negligently played by some, the king's idle servants, and more squeamishly beheld and censured by others, the king's foolish subjects*; and immediately upon this, adds
 the

the letter-writer, he wrote his famous ode, "Come, leave the loathed stage," &c. The revenge which he took on Ford, was, we are told, (from the pamphlet,) the writing an epigram upon him, in which there is an allusion, as we are informed in a note, to a character in a play of Ford's, "which *Ben says, Ford stole from him.*"

The next information which we derive from this curious pamphlet, is entirely new, no trace of it being found in the preface prefixed by the first editors to the folio edition of Shakspeare's plays in 1623, or in any other book of those times. This curious fact is, that John Ford, in conjunction with our poet's friends, Heminge and Condell, had the revisal of his papers after his death; and that Ben asserted, Ford's *Lover's Melancholy*, by the connivance of his associates in this trust, was stolen from those papers. This malicious charge gave birth, we are told, to many verses and epigrams, which are set forth in the pamphlet, but the letter-writer contents himself with producing two copies of these verses only *, to one of which is subscribed the name of *Thomas May*, and to the other these words: "*Endim. Porter*, the supposed author of these verses."

Such is the substance of Mr. Macklin's second letter. Let us now separately examine the parts of which it is composed.

The quaint title which the writer of this letter has given to this creature of his own imagination, (for so I shall now take leave to call the pamphlet,) "*Old Ben's Light Heart made heavy by young John's Melancholy Lover*," is, it must be acknowledged, most happily invented, and is so much in the manner of those times, that it for a long time staggered my incredulity, and almost convinced me of the authenticity of the piece to which it is said to have been affixed: and not a little, without doubt, did the inventor plume himself on so fortunate a thought. But how short-sighted is man!

* Of all the ancient poems which Chatterton pretended to have found in the famous Bristol chest, he wisely produced, I think, but *four*, that he ventured to call originals.

This very title, which the writer thus probably exulted in, and supposed would serve him,

“ ——— as a charmed shield,

“ And eke enchanted arms that none might pierce,”

is one of the most decisive circumstances to prove his forgery.

Nescia mens hominum fati, fortisque futuræ !
Turno tempus erit, magno cum optaverit emptum
Intactum Pallanta, et cum spolia ista, diemque
Oderit.—

———— Pallas te, hoc vulnere, Pallas
Immolat, et pœnam scelerato ex sanguine fumit.

Ben Jonson was in his own time frequently called the *judicious* Ben, the *learned* Ben, the *immortal* Ben, but had not, I believe, at the time this pamphlet is supposed to have been published, obtained the appellation of *Old* Ben. However, as this title was given him some years afterwards by Sir John Suckling in his *Session of the Poets*, which appears to have been written in August 1637, about the time of Jonson's death, (See Strafford's Lett. Vol. II. p. 114,) which celebrated poem, as well as the language of the present day, probably suggested the combination of *Old Ben* to Mr. Macklin, I shall lay no stress upon this objection. But the other part of the title of this pamphlet—“*Young John's Melancholy Lover*,” is very material in the present disquisition.—John Ford in the Dedication to his *Lover's Melancholy* says, that was the first *play* which he had *printed*; from which the letter-writer concluded that he must then have been a young man. In this particular, however, he was egregiously mistaken; for John Ford, who was the second son of Thomas Ford, Esq. was born at Ilington in Devonshire, and baptized there April 17, 1586⁵. When he was not yet seventeen, he became a member of the Middle-Temple, November 16, 1602, as I learn from the Register of that Society; and consequently in the year 1631, when

⁵ For this information I am indebted to the Rev. Mr. Palk, Vicar of Ilington.

this pamphlet is supposed to have been published, he had no title to the appellation of *young John*, being forty-five years old. And though *The Lover's Melancholy* was the first play that he published, he had produced the Masque of *The Sun's Darling* on the stage five years before, namely in March 1623-4; had exhibited one or more plays before that time; and so early as in the year 1606 had published a poem entitled *Fame's Memorial*, of which I have his original presentation-copy in Mss. in my collection. These are facts, of the greater part of which no writer of that time, conversant with dramatick history, could have been ignorant. Here certainly I might safely close the evidence; for Ben Jonson was born on the 11th of June, 1574⁶, and consequently in

1631

⁶ According to the best accounts. The precise year however of this poet's birth has not been ascertained. Fuller tells us, that "with all his industry he could not find him in his cradle, but that he could fetch him from his long coats;—when a little child, he lived in Hartshorne-lane near Charing-Cross." I in vain examined the Register of St. Margaret's, Westminster, and St. Martin's in the Fields, for the time of his baptism. There is a *lacuna* in the latter register from February to Dec. 1574. Ben Jonson therefore was probably born in that year, and he has himself told us that he was born on the 11th of June. This agrees with the account given by Anthony Wood, who says, that before his death in August 1637, he had completed his sixty-third year. I found in the Register of St. Martin's, that a Mrs. Margaret Jonson was married in November 1575 to Mr. Thomas Fowler. He was perhaps the poet's step-father, who is said to have been a bricklayer.

The greater part of the history of this poet's life is involved in much confusion. Most of the facts which have been transmitted concerning him, were originally told by Anthony Wood; and there is scarcely any part of his narrative in which some error may not be traced. Thus, we are told, that soon after his father's death his mother married a bricklayer; that she took her son from Westminster-school, and made him work at his step-father's trade. He helped, says Fuller, at the building of the new structure in Lincoln's-Inn, where having a trowel in his hand, he had a book in his pocket: and this book Mr. Gildon has found out to be *Horace*. In this situation, according to Wood, being pitied by his old master, Camden, he was recommended to Sir Walter Raleigh as a tutor to his son; and after attending him on his adventures, they parted, on his return, not, as I think says Wood, in cold blood. He then, we are told, was admitted into St. John's college in Cambridge, and after

1631 was in his fifty-seventh year; a period of life at which, though not in the hey-day of the blood, he could with

after a short stay there, went to London, and became an actor in the Curtain playhouse: and soon afterwards, "having improved his fancy by keeping scholastick company, he betook himself to writing plays." Lastly, we are told by the same writer, on the death of Daniel [in October 1619] "he succeeded him as poet-laureat, as Daniel succeeded Spenser."

If Jonson ever worked with his step-father at his trade in Lincoln's-Inn, it must have been either in 1588, or 1593, in each of which years, as I learn from Dugdale's *Origines Judiciales*, some new buildings were erected by that society. He could not have been taken from thence to accompany young Raleigh on his travels, who was not born till 1594, nor ever went abroad except with his father in 1617 to Guiana, where he lost his life. The poet might indeed about the year 1610 or 1611 have been private tutor to him; and it is probable that their connexion was about that time, as Jonson mentions that he furnished Sir Walter Raleigh with a portion of his *History of the World*, on which Sir Walter must have been then employed; but if the tutor and the pupil then parted in ill humour, it was rather too late for Jonson to enter into St. John's college, at the age of thirty-four or thirty-five years.

That at some period he was tutor to young Raleigh, is ascertained by the following anecdote, preserved in one of Oldys's Manuscripts:

"Mr. Camden recommended him to Sir Walter Raleigh, who trusted him with the care and education of his eldest son Walter, a gay spark, who could not brook Ben's rigorous treatment, but perceiving one foible in his disposition, made use of that to throw off the yoke of his government: and this was an unlucky habit Ben had contracted, through his love of jovial company, of being overtaken with liquor, which Sir Walter did of all vices most abominate, and hath most exclaimed against. One day, when Ben had taken a plentiful dose, and was fallen into a sound sleep, young Raleigh got a great basket, and a couple of men, who lay'd Ben in it, and then with a pole carried him between their shoulders to Sir Walter, telling him, their young master had sent home his tutor." This, adds Mr. Oldys, "I have from a Ms. memorandum-book written in the time of the civil wars, by Mr. Oldisworth, who was secretary, I think, to Philip earl of Pembroke."

The truth probably is, that he was admitted into St. John's college as a sizar in 1588, at which time he was fourteen years old, (the usual time then of going to the University,) and after staying there a few weeks was obliged from poverty to return to his father's trade; with whom he might have been employed on the buildings in Lincoln's-Inn in 1593, when he was nineteen. Not being able to endure this situation, he went, as he himself told Mr. Drummond of Hawthornden,

with no great propriety be called *Old*, unless by way of opposition to a *very young man*. But no such difference of

to the Low Countries, where he served a campaign, and distinguished himself in the field. On his return, perhaps in 1594, being now used to a life of adventure, he probably began his theatrical career, as a strolling player, and after having "ambled for some time by a play-waggon in the country," repaired to London, and endeavoured at the Curtain to obtain a livelihood as an actor, till, as Decker informs us, "not being able to set a *good face* upon't, he could not get a service among the mimicks."

Between that year and 1598, when his *Every Man in his Humour* was acted, he probably produced those unsuccessful pieces which Wood mentions. It is remarkable that Meres in that year enumerates Jonson among the writers of *tragedy*, though no tragedy of his writing, of so early a date, is now extant: a fact which none of his biographers have noticed.

Some particulars relative to this poet, which I have lately learned, will serve to disprove another of the facts mentioned by Wood; namely, that "he succeeded Daniel as poet-laureat, [in October 1619,] as Daniel did Spenser." I do not believe that any such office as poet-laureat existed in the time of Queen Elizabeth, and consequently Spenser never could have possessed it; nor has any proof whatsoever been produced of Daniel's having ever enjoyed that office.

Spenser, we are told by Camden, died in great poverty in 1598, and such has been the prevailing opinion ever since; but a fact which I have lately discovered, and which has not been noticed by any writer of that great poet's life, renders Camden's assertion very disputable. Spenser, I find, in February 1590-1, obtained from queen Elizabeth an annuity or pension of fifty pounds a year, during his life; which, the value of money and the modes of life being jointly considered, may be estimated as equal to two hundred pounds a year at this day. We see, therefore, that the incense lavished on his parsimonious mistress in the *Faery Queen*, which was published in the preceding year*, did not pass unrewarded, as all our biographical writers have supposed. The first notice I obtained of this grant, was from a short abstract of it in the Signet-office, and with a view to ascertain whether he was described as poet-laureat, I afterwards examined the patent itself, (*Patent Roll*, 33 Eliz. P. 3.) but no office or official duty is there mentioned. After the usual and formal preamble, *pro diversis causis et considerationibus*, &c. the words are, "*damus et concedimus dilecto subdito nostro, Edmundo Spenser,*" &c.

King James by letters patent dated February 3, 1615-16, granted to Ben Jonson an annuity or yearly pension of one hundred marks, during his

* *The Faery Queen* was entered on the Stationers' books by W. Ponsonby, in December, 1589.

of age subsisted between these two poets. If a man of fifty-seven is to be accounted old, the man of forty-five is not young.

The

his life, "in consideration of the good and acceptable service heretofore done and hereafter to be done by the said B. J." Then therefore, and not in 1619, undoubtedly it was that he was made poet-laureat, if ever he was so constituted; but not one word is there in the grant, which I examined in the chapel of the Rolls, touching that office: unless it may be supposed to be comprehended in the words which I have just quoted. On the 23d of April 1630, king Charles by letters patent, reciting the former grant, and that it had been surrendered, was pleased, "in consideration (says the patent) of the good and acceptable service done unto us and our said father by the said B. J. and especially to encourage him to proceed in those services of his wit and pen, which we have enjoined unto him, and which we expect from him," to augment his annuity of one hundred marks, to one hundred pounds *per ann.* during his life, payable from Christmas, 1629, and the first payment to commence at Lady-day 1630. Charles at the same time granted him a tierce of Canary Spanish wine yearly during his life, out of his majesty's cellars at Whitehall: of which there is no mention in the former grant. From hence, and from the present of one hundred pounds sent to Jonson by the king in 1629, we may see how extremely improbable the story is, which has been recorded, on I know not what authority, and which Dr. Smollet was idle enough to insert in his History; that Ben in that year, being reduced to great distress, and living in an obscure alley, petitioned his majesty to assist him in his poverty and sickness; and on receiving ten guineas, said to the messenger who brought him the donation, "his majesty has sent me ten guineas, because I am poor and live in an alley; go and tell him that his soul lives in an alley."

None of his biographers appear to have known that Ben Jonson obtained from king James a reversionary grant of the office of Master of the Revels. His majesty by letters patent dated October 5, in the nineteenth year of his reign, (1621) granted him, by the name and addition of "our beloved servant, Benjamin Jonson, gentleman," the said office, to be held and enjoyed by him and his assigns, during his life, from and after the death of Sir George Buck and Sir John Astley, or as soon as the office should become vacant by resignation, forfeiture, or surrender: but Jonson never derived any advantage from this grant, because Sir John Astley survived him. It should seem from a passage in the *Satiromastix* of his antagonist Decker, printed in 1602, that Ben had made some attempt to obtain a reversionary grant of this place before the death of queen Elizabeth: for *Sir Vaughan* in that piece says to *Horace*, [i. e. Jonson,] "I have some cossens-german at court shall beget you the reversion of the Master of the King's Revels, or else to be his Lord of Misrule nowe at Christmas."

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The next suspicious circumstance in the letter which we are now examining, is, that in the pretended extracts from this old pamphlet most of the circumstances mentioned might have been collected by a modern writer from books of either those or subsequent times: and such *new* facts as are mentioned, can be proved to be fictions. Such of the pretended extracts as are true, are old; and such as are new, are false. Thus, to take the former class first, we are informed, (as from the pamphlet,) that our poet and Jonson were at variance; that old Ben took every means of depreciating the lowly Shakspeare; that he asserted our poet had little Latin, and less Greek, and did not understand the dramatick laws; that Jonson ridiculed some of his pieces; and that this was a strong proof of his ingratitude, Shakspeare having first introduced him to the stage.—All these facts Mr. M. might have learned from Rowe's Life of Shakspeare, and Pope's Preface to his edition; from Dr. Birch's Life of Ben Jonson published in 1743; from Drummond of Hawthornden's Conversation with that poet; from the old

It has been commonly understood, that on Ben Jonson's death in August 1637, Sir William D'Avenant [then Mr. D'Avenant] was appointed poet-laureate in his room: but he at that time received no favour from the crown. Sixteen months afterwards, Dec. 13, 1638, in the 14th year of Charles the First, letters patent passed the great seal, granting, "in consideration of service heretofore done and hereafter to be done by William Davenant, gentleman," an annuity of one hundred pounds *per Ann.* to the said W. D. *during his majesty's pleasure.* By this patent no Canary wine was granted; and no mention is made of the office of poet-laureate. It is at present conferred, not by letters patent, but by a warrant signed and sealed by the Lord Chamberlain, nominating A. B. to the office, with the accustomed fees thereunto belonging.

7 Which Ben claimed the merit of having first taught his contemporaries. See his Verses to his old servant Richard Brome, prefixed to *The Northern Lass*, which was first acted in July, 1629:

- "Now you are got into a nearer room
- "Of fellowship, professing my old arts,
- "And you do do them well, with good applause;
- "Which you have justly gained from the stage,
- "By observation of those *comick laws*
- "Which I, your master, first did teach the age."

play entitled *The Return from Parnassus*; from Fuller's *Worthies*, Winstanley, and Langbaine; from Jonson's own verses on Shakspeare prefixed to all the editions; from his prologue to *Every Man in his Humour*; from his *Bartholomew Fair* and his *Discoveries*; and from many other books. In Mr. Pope's preface was found that praise, that in our poet's plays every speech might be assigned to its proper speaker without the aid of marginal directions: an encomium which perhaps is too high, even when applied to Shakspeare; but which, when applied to Ford, (as it is in Mr. Macklin's *first* letter,) becomes ridiculous.

Let us now consider the *new* facts, which for the first time are given to the publick from this rare old tract. The first new fact stated is, that Shakspeare's fame, *after his death*, grew too great for Ben either to bear with or wound. Now this was so far from being the case, that it was at this particular period that Jonson's pieces, which were collected into a volume in 1616, appear to have been in most estimation; and from the time of Shakspeare's death to the year 1625, both Ben's fame and that of Fletcher, seem to have been at their height. In this period Fletcher produced near thirty plays, which were acted with applause; and Jonson was during the whole of that time well received in the courts of James and Charles, for each of whom he wrote several Masques, which the wretched taste of that age very highly estimated; and was patronized and extravagantly extolled by the scholars of the time, as much superior to Shakspeare. In this period also he produced his *Devil's an Ass*, and his *Staple of News*, each of which had some share of success. In the year 1631 indeed he was extremely indigent and distressed, and had been so from the year 1625, when I think he was struck with the palsy; but in consequence of this indigence and distress he was not precisely at that period an object of jealousy to the partizans of Shakspeare.

Another and a very material false fact stated from this pamphlet is, that Jonson's *New Inn or Light Heart*, and Ford's *Melancholy Lover*, were produced for the first time
on

on the same stage, in *the same week*: a fact concerning which the writer of the pamphlet, *if the pamphlet had any real existence*, could scarcely have been mistaken.

These two plays were certainly represented for the first time at *the same theatre*, namely Blackfriars, as Mr. Macklin learned from their respective title-pages; but not in the same *week*, there being no less than *two months* interval between the production of the two pieces.

Ford's play was exhibited at the Blackfriars on the 24th of November, 1628, when it was licensed for the stage, as appears from the Office-book of Sir Henry Herbert, Master of the Revels to King Charles the First, a manuscript now before me, of which a more particular account may be found in the Second Part of this volume [*Historical Account of the English Stage, &c.*]; and Jonson's *New Inn* on the 19th of January in the following year, 1628-9. Very soon indeed after the ill success of Jonson's piece, the King's Company brought out at the same theatre a new play called *The Love-sick Maid, or the Honour of young Ladies*, which was licensed by Sir Henry Herbert, on the 9th of February, 1628-9, and acted with extraordinary applause. This play, which was written by Jonson's own servant, Richard Brome, was so popular, that the managers of the King's Company, on the 10th of March, presented the Master of the Revels with the sum of two pounds, "on the good success of *The Honour of Ladies*;" the only instance I have met with of such a compliment being paid him. No mention whatsoever is made of *The Lover's Melancholy* having been attended with any extraordinary success, though Mr. M. from private motives chose to represent it as having been acted with uncommon applause.

We are next told, that Ben was so exasperated by the damnation of his piece, that he printed it with a very singular title-page, which is given; and that *immediately upon this* he wrote his celebrated ode, "Come, leave the loathed stage," &c. It is not very clear what the letter-writer means by the words, *immediately upon this*. If he means that Jonson wrote his Ode immediately after

his play was damned in 1629, the assertion is made at random; if he means that immediately after he had published his play he wrote his ode, the fact is not true. The ode is printed at the end of the play, which was published in April, 1631.

The next new fact found in this curious pamphlet is, that Ben Jonson, mortified by his own defeat and the success which Ford's play obtained, wrote the following Epigram upon his successful competitor:

“PLAYWRIGHT, by chance, hearing some toys I had writ,

“Cry'd to my face, they were th' elixir of wit;

“And I must now believe him, for to-day

“Five of my jests, then stolne, pass'd him a play.”

This epigram, I own, is so much in the manner of the time, and particularly of Ben Jonson, that for a long time I knew not how to question its authenticity. It is so strongly marked, that every poetical reader must immediately exclaim, *aut Erasmus, aut diabolus*. Nor indeed is it to be wondered at that it is much in Ben's manner; for,—not to keep the reader longer in suspense, it *was written* by him.—Well then, says the writer of the letter in question, here you have a strong confirmation of all the other facts which you affect to doubt, and every impartial judge must acquit me of having fabricated them. This, however, we shall find a *non sequitur*: for this very epigram, though written by Jonson, is as decisive a proof of imposition as any other which I have produced. The fact is, this epigram, addressed to PLAYWRIGHT, is found among Jonson's printed poems, as are two others addressed to the same person⁸. Mr. M. I suppose, was

⁸ See Jonson's Works, folio, 1616.

Epig. XLIX.

TO PLAYWRIGHT.

“PLAYWRIGHT me reads, and still my verses damnes;

“He says, I want the tongue of epigrammes;

“I have no salt; no bawdrie he doth meane,

“For wittie, in his language, is obscene.

“PLAYWRIGHT, I loath to have thy manners knowne

“In my chaste booke; professe them in thine owne.”

Epig.

was possessed only of the modern edition of Jonson's Works printed in 8vo. in 1716, and, no dates being assigned to the *poems*, thought he might safely make free with this epigram, and affix the date of the year 1630, or 1631, to it; but unluckily it was published by Old Ben himself fourteen or fifteen years before, in the first folio collection of his works in 1616, and consequently could not have any relation to a literary altercation between him and Ford at the time *The New Inn* and *The Lover's Melancholy* were brought on the scene. It appears from Ben Jonson's Dedication of his Epigrams to Lord Pembroke, that most of them, though published in 1616, were written some years before⁹; the epigram in question therefore may be referred to a still earlier period than the time of its publication.

On one of the lines in this epigram, as exhibited by Mr. Macklin,

“ Five of my jests, then stolne, pass'd him a play.”

we find the following note:—“ Alluding to a character in *The Ladies' Trial*, which Ben says Ford stole from him.” If the writer of this letter had said, “ Alluding to a character in *The Ladies' Trial*, which Ford stole from Ben Jonson,” we might suppose him only mistaken; and this anachronism (supposing that the epigram had been written in 1631) might not affect the present question. But we are told, “ *Ben* says so.” He certainly has not said so in his works, and therefore the letter-writer must mean, that it is asserted in the pamphlet from which he pretended to quote, that Ben had said so. But Ben could

Epig. LXVIII.

ON PLAYWRIGHT.

- “ PLAYWRIGHT, convict of publick wrongs to men,
- “ Takes private beatings, and begins againe.
- “ Two kinds of valour he doth shew at ones,
- “ Active in his braine, and passive in his bones.”

The person aimed at, under the name of *Playwright*, was probably Decker.

⁹ “ I here offer to your lordship the ripeſt of my ſtudies, my epigrammes, which, though they carry danger in the ſound, do not therefore ſeek your ſhelter. For *when I made them*, I had nothing in my conſcience, to expreſſing of which I did need a cypher. But if I be ſalne into *theſe times*, wherein, for the likenes of vice,” &c.

not possibly have said so, even if he had written this epigram at the time to which it has been falsely ascribed; for this plain reason, that *The Ladies' Trial* was not produced till several years afterwards. It was first printed in 1639, two years after Ben Jonson's death, and does not appear to have been licensed by Sir Henry Herbert before that time. The origin of this note, by which *confusion is worse confounded*, was probably this: Langbaine under the article, *Fletcher*, mentions that a scene in his *Love's Pilgrimage* was *stollen* from the very play of which we have been speaking; Jonson's *New Inn*. This scene Fletcher himself could not have stolen from *The New Inn*, for he was dead some years before that play appeared; but Shirley, who had the revival of some of those pieces which were left imperfect by Fletcher, (as appears from Sir Henry Herbert's Office-book¹), finding *The New Inn* unsuccessful, took the liberty to borrow a scene from it, which he inserted in *Love's Pilgrimage*, when that play was revived, or as Sir Henry Herbert calls it, *renewed*, in 1635². Mr. M. had probably

¹ In Sir Henry Herbert's Office-book is the following entry: "For a play of Fletcher's, *corrected by Shirley*, called *The Night-walkers*, the 11th of May, 1633,—£.2 0 0.

² "Received of Blagrove from the King's Company, for the *renewing of Love's Pilgrimage*, the 16th of September, 1635,—£.1 0 0." *Ibidem*.

The addition of a new scene, and sometimes an entire act, to an old play, appears from the following entries in the same book to have been common:

"For the adding of a scene to *The Virgin Martyr*, this 7th July, 1624,—£.0 10 0."

"For allowing of a new act in an old play, this 13th May, 1629,—£.0 10 0."

"For allowing of an old play, new written or forbisht by Mr. Bifton, the 12th of January, 1631,—£.1 0 0."

"An old play, with some new scenes, *Doctor Lambe and the Witches*, to Salisbury Courte, the 16th August, 1634,—£.1 0 0."

"Received of old Cartwright for allowing the [Fortune] company to add scenes to an old play, and to give it out for a new one, this 12th of May, 1636, £.1 0 0."

This practice prevailed in Shakspeare's time. "The players," says Lupton, in his *London and the Country carbonadoed and quartered*, 8vo, 1602, "are as crafty with an old play, as bauds with old faces: the one puts on a new fresh colour, the other a new face and name."

probably some imperfect recollection of what he had read in Langbaine, and found it convenient to substitute Ford's play for that of Fletcher.

We are next told, that this pamphlet asserts that Ben Jonson had given out that *The Lover's Melancholy* was not written by Ford, but purloined from Shakspeare's papers, of which Ford in conjunction with Heminge and Condell is said to have had the revisal, when the first folio edition of our poet's works was published in 1623.

It should not be forgotten, that the writer of this letter had asserted in a former letter, that it appears from *several of Ford's Sonnets and Verses* that he lived in the strictest intimacy with Shakspeare, to the time of his death: and I may confidently add, that there is not the smallest ground for the assertion, no such sonnets or verses being extant. We need not, therefore, hesitate to pronounce the present assertion to be equally unfounded as the former.

After what has been already stated, it would be an idle waste of time to enter into any long disquisition on this fiction. It was evidently thrown out to excite the expectation of the town with respect to the piece itself on the night of the performance. The old plays of the minor poets of the last age being in 1748 little known or attended to, those who were curious could not easily satisfy themselves concerning the merit or demerit of *The Lover's Melancholy* by reading it, (it not being republished in Dodsley's Collection,) and therefore would naturally resort to the theatre to examine whether there was any ground for such an assertion: the precise end which the letter-writer had in view. When he talked of Shakspeare's *papers*, he was probably thinking of what Heminge and Condell have said in their preface,—“we have scarce received from him a blot in *his papers*.” But by *his papers* they meant nothing more than

If the Office-books of Edmund Tilney, Esq. and Sir George Buck, who were Masters of the Revels during the greater part of the reign of King James the First, shall ever be discovered, I have no doubt that the *Vision, Masque, and Prophecy*, in the fifth act of *Cymbeline*, will be found to have been interpolated by the players after our poet's death.

the old copies of his plays which had lain long in their house, from which they printed part of their edition. Whatever other papers our poet left, without doubt devolved to his family at Stratford.

The four encomiastick lines signed "Thomas May," and the elegant verses ascribed to Endymion Porter, now alone remain to be considered.

Endymion Porter, whom Sir William Davenant, Shakspeare's supposed son, calls "lord of his muse and heart," being mentioned by Mr. Rowe in his *Life of Shakspeare*, as a great admirer of our poet, his name naturally presented itself to the writer of this letter, as a proper one to be subscribed to an eulogy on him and Ford; and he found, or might have found, in Langbaine's *Account of the Dramatick Poets*, that May lived in the strictest intimacy with Endymion Porter, to whom he has dedicated his *Antigone*, published in 1631; a play which probably, when this letter was written, was in Mr. Macklin's possession. Thomas Randolph and Thomas Carew having each of them written verses to Jonson after the publication of the celebrated ode annexed to his unfortunate *New Inn*, requesting him not to leave the stage, as the letter-writer might also have learned from Langbaine, who has given Randolph's Ode at length, he naturally would read over their lines; and Randolph having written "*A Gratulatory Poem to Ben Jonson for his adopting of him to be his son*," in which we find the following hyperbolical couplet,

"But if heaven take thee, envying us thy lyre,
" 'Tis to pen anthems for an angel's quire;"

he is not improperly styled by the letter-writer, "Jonson's ZANY³."

³ Randolph's attachment to Ben Jonson was also noticed in the letter printed in the preceding month, in *The General Advertiser*, (the *Theatrical Gazette* of that time,) by way of prelude to Mr. Ryan's benefit. "He was, says the writer, a man of pregnant wit, gay humour, and of excellent learning; which gained him the esteem of the town, and particularly recommended him to Ben Jonson, who adopted him one of his sons, and held him in equal esteem with the ingenious Mr. Cartwright, another of the laureat's adopted sons."

The four lines to which May's name is affixed, are inscribed, "*To my worthy friend John Ford;*" and it is observable that a copy of verses written by William Singleton, and prefixed to *The Lover's Melancholy*, are also inscribed, "*To my worthy friend, the author, Master John Ford.*" But why, we shall be told, might not May, as well as Mr. Singleton, address Ford as his *worthy friend*? Be it so then; but unluckily, May, precisely when he is supposed to have made this panegyrick upon Ford, and to have informed the publick, that, even supposing *The Lover's Melancholy* was from Shakspeare's

" ———— *treasury* reft,

" *That plunderer Ben ne'er made so rich a theft;*"

unluckily, I say, at this very time, May was living in the strictest friendship with Jonson; for to May's translation of Lucan, published in 1630, is prefixed a commendatory poem by Jonson,—addressed "*To his chosen friend, the learned translator of Lucan, Thomas May, Esquire,*" and subscribed, "*Your true friend in judgment and choise, Benjamin Jonson.*"

The verses subscribed, *Thomas May*, are as follows:

" 'Tis said, from Shakspeare's *mine* your play you drew;

" What need, when Shakspeare still survives in you?

" But grant it were from his *vast treasury* reft,

" *That plunderer Ben ne'er made so rich a theft.*"

I have already observed, that, Randolph having written a reply to Jonson's ode, the writer of this letter would naturally look into his works. In a poem addressed to *Ben Jonson*, speaking of the works of Aristotle, (the writer by the way, to whom that sentence of Greek which is found in the title-page of the present edition was originally applied,) he has these lines:

" ———— I could fit

" Under a willow covert, and repeat

" Those deep and learned lays, on every part

" Grounded in judgment, subtilty, and art,

" *That*

- " That the great tutor to the greatest king,
 " The shepherd of Stagira us'd to sing;
 " The shepherd of Stagira, *that unfolds*
 " *All nature's closet*, shews what e'er it holds,
 " The matter, form, sense, motion, place, and mea-
 sure,
 " Of every thing contain'd in her *vast treasury*."

As Shakspeare's "*vast treasury*" may have been borrowed from this writer, so the "*rich thefts* of that *plunderer Ben*" might have been suggested to Mr. M. by the following lines addressed by Thomas Carew "to Ben Jonson, upon occasion of his ode of defiance annexed to his play of the *New Inn*:"

- " Let them the dear expence of oil upbraid,
 " Suck'd by thy watchful lamp, that hath betray'd
 " To *theft* the blood of martyr'd authors, spilt
 " Into thy ink, whilst thou grow'st pale with guilt.
 " Repine not at the taper's thrifty waste,
 " That sleeks thy terser poems; nor is haste
 " Praise, but excuse; and if thou overcome
 " A knotty writer, bring the *booty* home;
 " Nor think it *theft*, if the *rich* spoils so torn
 " From conquer'd authors, be as trophies worn."

I have traced the marked expressions in this tetrastick to Randolph and Carew; they might, however, have been suggested by a book still more likely to have been consulted by the writer of it, Langbaine's *Account of the Dramatick Poets*; and particularly by that part of his work in which he speaks of *Ben Jonson's* literary *thefts*, on which I have this moment happened to cast my eye.

"To come lastly to *Ben Jonson*, who, as Mr. Dryden affirms, has borrowed more from the ancients than any; I crave leave to say in his behalf, that our late laureat has far out-done him in *thefts*.—When Mr. Jonson borrowed, 'twas from the *treasury* of the ancients, which is so far from any diminution of his worth, that I think it is to his honour, at least-wise I am sure he is justified by his son Cartwright, in the following lines:

" What though thy searching Muse did rake the dust
 " Oft time, and purge old metals from their rust?
 " Is it no labour, no art, think they, to
 " Snatch shipwrecks from the deep, as divers do;
 " And rescue jewels from the covetous sand,
 " Making the seas hid *wealth* adorn the land?
 " What though thy culling Muse did *rob* the store
 " Of Greek and Latin gardens, to bring o'er
 " Plants to thy native soil? their virtues were
 " Improv'd far more by being planted here.—
 " *Thefts* thus become just works; they and their grace
 " Are wholly thine: thus doth the stamp and face
 " Make that the king's that's ravish'd from the *mine*;
 " In others then 'tis ore, in thee 'tis coin."

" On the contrary, though Mr. Dryden has likewise borrowed from the Greek and Latin poets,—which I purposely omit to tax him with, as thinking what he has taken to be lawful prize, yet I can not but observe withal, that he has *plunder'd* the chief Italian, Spanish, and French wits for forage, notwithstanding his pretended contempt of them; and not only so, but even his own countrymen have been forced to pay him tribute, or, to say better, have not been exempt from being *pillaged*⁴."

Here we have at once—the *mine*, the *treasury*, the *plunderer*, and the *rich thefts*, of this modern-antique composition⁵.

The

⁴ *Account of the Dramatick Poets*, 8vo. 1691, pp. 145, 148, 149.

⁵ Mr. Macklin tells us, that the pamphlet from which he pretends to quote, mentions, that among other depreciating language Jonson had said of Shakspeare, that "the man had imagination and *wit* none could deny, but that they were ever guided by true judgment in the *rules* and conduct of a piece, none could with justice assert, both being ever servile to *raise the laughter of fools* and the *wonder of the ignorant*."

"Being guided by judgment in the conduct of a piece," is perfectly intelligible; but what are we to understand by *being guided by judgment in the rules of a piece*? However, every part of this sentence also may be traced to its source. Mr. Pope has said in his preface, that "not only the common audience had no notion of the *rules* of writing, but few of the better sort piqued themselves upon any great degree of knowledge or nicety that way, till Ben Jonson getting possession of the stage, brought
critical

The last copy of verses, ascribed to Endymion Porter, are uncommonly elegant, and perhaps one of the best invented fictions that can be pointed out. “These *letter-tyrant* elves” is much in the manner of the time, as is “*their pedant selves*,” in a subsequent line. But how difficult is it to assume the manner or language of a former age, without occasionally lapsing into those of the present! The phrases, “*upon the whole*,” and *from college*,—

“Indeed, says Tom, *upon the whole*,” &c.

“But Ben and Tom *from college*—”

critical learning into vogue:” and Jonson himself in his *Discoveries*, speaking of Shakspeare, says, “his *wit* was in his power, would the *rule* of it had been so.”

In Mr. Pope’s Preface we are told, that “in tragedy nothing was so sure to *surprise*, and create *admiration*, as the most strange, improbable, and consequently most unnatural, incidents and events.—In comedy, nothing was so sure to please, as mean buffoonery, vile ribaldry, and unmannerly jests of *fools* and clowns.”

Prefixed to Randolph’s Works is a panegyrick written by Mr. Richard West, from whose poem two lines are quoted by Langbaine, which were also inserted in *The General Advertiser* of the 5th of March 1748, in the encomium on Randolph’s plays.

In Mr. West’s Verses, speaking of ordinary dramatick poets, he says,

“For humours to lie leiger, they are seen

“Oft in a tavern or a bowling-green.

“They do observe each place and company;

“As strictly as a traveller or spy;—

“And sit with patience an hour by the heels,

“To learn the nonsense of the constables;

“*Such jig-like flim-flams being got, to make*

“*The rabble laugh, and nut-cracking forsake.*”

Randolph is then described, and among other high praises, we are told,

“There’s none need fear to surfeit with his phrase;

“He has no giant raptures, to amaze

“And torture *weak capacities with wonder.*”

We have already seen that Mr. Macklin had been just perusing Ben Jonson’s Epigrams. In his second Epigram, which is addressed to his book, are these lines:

“—by thy wiser temper let men know,

“Thou art not covetous of least self-fame,

“Made from the hazard of another’s shame:

“Much less, with lewd, prophane, and beastly phrase,

“*To catch the world’s loose laughter, or vaine gaze.*”

have

have a very modern sound, and are not, I believe, used by any of our old English writers.—I must also observe that Mr. M. found his *after-times* in the old panegyrick on Ford, which he inserted in his first letter, and *Avon's swan* in Ben Jonson's Verses on Shakspeare, prefixed to all the editions of his plays; and that the extravagant and unfounded praise here given to Ford, who, like our great poet, is said to have been *sent from heaven*, and the insinuation that the *Lower's Melancholy* was “*Shakspeare's, every word*,” were evidently calculated for the temporary purpose of aiding a benefit, and putting money into the purse of the writer.

While, however, we transfer these elegant lines from Endymion Porter to Mr. Macklin, let us not forget that they exhibit no common specimen of an easy versification and a good taste, and that they add a new wreath to the poetical crown of this veteran comedian.

I have only to add, that John Ford and Thomas May were so far from being at variance with Old Ben, that in *Jonsonius Virbius*, a collection of poems on the death of Ben Jonson, published in 1638, about six months after his death, there is an encomiastick poem by *John Ford*; and in this volume is also found a panegyrick by Ford's friend, George Donne, and another by *Thomas May*, who styles Ben “the best of our English poets.” On this, however, I lay no great stress, because the same collection exhibits a poem by Jonson's old antagonist, Owen Feltham: but if, after all that has been stated, the smallest doubt could remain concerning the subject of our present disquisition, I might observe, that Ford appears not only to have lived on amicable terms with Ben Jonson himself, (at least we have no proof to the contrary,) but with his servant, Richard Brome; to whose play entitled *The Northern Lads*, which was acted by the King's Company on the 29th of July 1629, the very year of the publication of *The Lower's Melancholy*, and of the first exhibition of *The New Inn*, is prefixed an high panegyrick by “the author's very friend, *John Ford*.”

Let

Let the present detection be a lesson to mankind in matters of greater moment, and teach those whom higher considerations do not deter from invading the rights or property of others by any kind of fiction, to abstain from such an attempt, from the *inefficacy* and *folly* of it; for the most plausible and best fabricated tale, if properly examined, will crumble to pieces, like “the labour’d mole,” loosened from its foundations by the continued force of the ocean; while simple and honest truth, firm and self-dependent, will ever maintain its ground against all assailants,—

“As rocks resist the billows and the sky.”

MALONE.

END OF THE FIRST PART OF THE FIRST VOLUME.



